

# JAMESTOWN AND HER NEIGHBORS



JANE E. DAVIS



MAP OF JAMES RIVER  
AND  
LOWER VIRGINIA PENINSULA



This is a detailed historical map of the Chesapeake Bay region, showing the York River, James River, and surrounding areas. The map includes labels for various locations such as York City, James City, Williamsburg, and Norfolk. It also depicts the Chesapeake Bay, Cape Charles, and Cape Henry. The map is oriented with North at the top.

Key locations and features labeled on the map include:

- Chesapeake Bay** (top right)
- Cape Charles** (top right)
- Cape Henry** (bottom right)
- York River** (top left)
- James River** (middle left)
- York City** (top left)
- James City** (middle left)
- Williamsburg** (middle left)
- Norfolk** (bottom right)
- Elizabeth City** (middle right)
- Princess Anne** (bottom right)
- Nansemond** (bottom left)
- Wichita** (middle left)
- Chesapeake Bay** (top right)
- Cape Charles** (top right)
- Cape Henry** (bottom right)
- York River** (top left)
- James River** (middle left)
- York City** (top left)
- James City** (middle left)
- Williamsburg** (middle left)
- Norfolk** (bottom right)
- Elizabeth City** (middle right)
- Princess Anne** (bottom right)
- Nansemond** (bottom left)
- Wichita** (middle left)

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Photo courtesy Virginia State Chamber of Commerce

The old Jamestown Tower and the church of that time restored in 1907

JAMESTOWN AND HER  
NEIGHBORS  
ON  
VIRGINIA'S HISTORIC PENINSULA

By  
JANE E. DAVIS



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## Foreword

**V**IRGINIA'S Historic Peninsula is that part of the State lying between the James and the York Rivers and extending from Richmond to Old Point Comfort. For the purposes of this book, which is to treat of the earliest English settlers in America, it includes a narrow strip south of the James, the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth, and also the harbor of Hampton Roads.

In placing before the public these chapters of early Virginia history, I wish to express my indebtedness to those who have verified the facts contained in them. Prominent among these are Dr. Lyon G. Tyler, president emeritus of College of William and Mary; Colonel I. N. Lewis, U.S.A. retired, formerly of the Coast Artillery School at Fort Monroe, and the inventor of the Lewis gun; Miss Lottie Garrett, of Williamsburg; Dr. W. A. R. Goodwin, rector of Bruton Church, and restorer of Colonial Williamsburg; Mrs. John B. Lightfoot, of Richmond, Chairman of the Jamestown Committee of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities; Mrs. Janie Hope Marr, of Lexington; and Major Robert Arthur, Librarian at Fort Monroe.

The principal authorities consulted were Captain John Smith, Strachey, Hening, Stith, Bruce, Howe, Fiske, John Esten Cooke, Rhodes, and Yonge. For the use of the rarest of these books as well as old magazines and newspapers in the valuable Virginia collection in the Library of William and Mary College, I am indebted to the courtesy of former President Tyler and, for per-

mission to use some of the sketches, to the *Southern Workman* of Hampton, Virginia, in which they first appeared.

Some of the chapters in the present volume were included in a book called "Round About Jamestown," privately printed at the time of the Jamestown Exposition; but they have been thoroughly revised and brought up to date and much new material has been added.

JANE E. DAVIS

Hampton, Virginia, May 1929



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# Jamestown and Her Neighbors





# I

## THE KECOUGHTAN INDIANS

AT THE END of the sixteenth century there stood on the Lower Virginia Peninsula, near the point of land later named "Point Comfort," an Indian village called Kecoughtan.<sup>1</sup> It consisted of about twenty wigwams, sheltering a population of that number of warriors of the Kecoughtan tribe with their women and children.

Their wigwams, which were in the form of huge ovens, were made by inserting saplings in the earth, and afterward drawing their tops together, in which position they were permanently kept by binding them with withes. The framework was then covered with mats and pieces of bark. An opening was made in either side, and at the top was a place for the smoke to pass out from the fire of pine logs built on the earth in the centre of the wigwam. At night the beds, "consisting of hurdles and reeds laid upon small poles, supported by posts rising only a foot from the ground," were drawn in a circle about the fire. Upon these, mats and skins were placed, and the Indian in lying down would draw over him another mat or skin, using a third for a pillow. In the daytime, when not hunting or fishing, the socially disposed Kecoughtan joined his neighbors on one of the scaffolds of reeds or dry willows which were built at intervals in the village. Here the men smoked and conversed while the women spread maize and fish to dry.

The dress of these Indians was extremely simple, consisting mainly of skins ornamented with shells, bones, and teeth. They wore necklaces, earrings, and bracelets

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<sup>1</sup>Pronounced Ke-ko-tan

of birds' claws, bits of copper, and strings of pearls, feathers in their hair, and on their bodies paints of "lovely colors, beautiful and pleasing to the eye." Some were also tattooed in black and red "with little patches of lively colors in a braver fashion than those in the West Indies."

At mealtime the Kecoughtan spread a mat on the ground and on this placed a dish of food. Before eating he took a small piece of food and threw it into the fire as an offering to evil spirits, at the same time mumbling a sort of grace. The bill of fare varied with the season: in March and April the Indians depended on fish, oysters, and game; in May they lived on strawberries, mulberries, and fish; during the summer they continued the fish and berry diet and added roasting ears and other vegetables; while in the fall and winter they counted on nuts, wild fowl, maize, and oysters. The principal root which they converted into food was the tuckahoe. This resembled the flag in its growth, and was very abundant. In preparing it the Indians laid the roots in a pile and covered them with leaves, ferns, and earth. They then built a fire on either side which they allowed to burn for twenty-four hours. Old chroniclers tell us that the Indians grew fat or lean according to the season, but that actual famine was unknown.

The Kecoughtans are said to have been admirable husbandmen ("better husbands then in any parte else that we have observed"), and to have had as many as three thousand acres of cleared land, a large part of which was planted in maize. After clearing the land by the primitive method of girdling the trees, the ground was prepared for planting by means of a rude hoe made of a stick to which was attached the horn or shoulder blade of a deer. Maize, beans, peas, pumpkins, gourds, and

cymplings were planted in the same field. "A field of maize (near Kecoughtan), long before the vessels of the first English explorers appeared, was almost the exact counterpart of the same field planted with the same grain three hundred years afterwards by the modern Virginia farmer. \* \* \* \* There would be the same number of stalks to the hill, with bean vines clambering upon the stalks, peas running over the ground between the rows, and pumpkins, bulky and yellow, peeping through the mass of green leaves." The grain was stored in long baskets in shelters made especially for them.

The Indian garden was made near the wigwams, and was from one to two hundred feet square. In it were grown muskmelons, gourds, and tobacco. In the autumn the Kecoughtans gathered great quantities of persimmons, and after drying them stored them away like dried dates or figs. The kernels of the chestnut and chinquapin were considered great delicacies when dried, beaten into flour, and converted into bread. The only salt in use in the village of Kecoughtan was the ash of stickweed and hickory, and the Indians had no knowledge of any spirits except the juice of the crushed fiber of the maize stalk. Water gourds were the flagons of the aboriginal Virginians. Partly on account of this abstinence and partly because of the active, out-of-door life led by all the tribe, the Kecoughtans, in common with the other Virginia tribes, were fine specimens of physical strength and grace. Their general health was good and they frequently lived to a great age.

The prosperity of the Kecoughtans excited the cupidity of Powhatan, the powerful sachem of the Powhatan Confederacy, and on the death of their old werowance, when things were in confusion, he attacked and conquered them. He made his son Pochins werowance of



the conquered tribe, and it was he and his warriors who met the English adventurers soon after they founded the first colony in the New World. When Captain John Smith, from Jamestown on the neighboring James River, was exploring in his shallop the shore near Point Comfort, the Indians made signs to the white men to come ashore to their town, whose bark-covered wigwams could be seen in the distance, and led the way by swimming across the river that lay between, the Englishmen following in their shallop. On reaching this village of the Kecoughtans (where the National Soldiers' Home now stands) the strangers were hospitably entertained. Although at first received with "doleful noises," the occasion for which they did not understand, they were soon seated on mats and feasted till they could eat no more. When the meal was ended, they were given tobacco to smoke in huge clay pipes. We can imagine the curiosity with which the men from across the sea must have watched the strange, fantastic dance that formed part of their entertainment, and the interest with which they must have talked over their adventure with their shipmates on their return. Captain Smith describes the Indian town as located on a plain nearly surrounded by water. "Kecoughtan," he says, "so conveniently turneth itself into Bayes and Creeks that it is a very pleasant place to inhabit, and is also a convenient harbor for fishing and other small boats."

Not long after this adventure Captain Smith was sent by the starving colonists at Jamestown to Kecoughtan to trade for corn. The Indians, knowing the extremity of the English and looking on them with less friendly eyes since they had gained a footing in the land, held the corn at a high price, scorning the beads and other trinkets which were the usual medium of exchange. Smith,





Photo courtesy Virginia State Chamber of Commerce

Jamestown: This picture was taken from English ramparts built during the Revolution. The monument to Captain John Smith, the best known and most adventurous of the early settlers, stands in the foreground



Photo courtesy Virginia State Chamber of Commerce

The ancient cemetery at Jamestown. The great tree separates James Blair, founder of William and Mary College, and his wife, Sarah. Tradition has it that Miss Sarah Harrison refused to wed her father's choice and that his curse, impotent in life, has separated them in death. They were buried side by side, and the tree sprang up in the middle of the tomb to separate them



finally seeing that friendly overtures would not avail, decided to resort to force, and running his boat ashore he and his men shot off their muskets, whereat the Indians fled to the woods. As soon as the English landed, however, some sixty or seventy painted savages rushed back, singing and dancing and bearing before them their "Okee," or idol, which was made of painted skins stuffed with moss and loaded down with chains and ornaments of every description. They were armed with clubs and bows and arrows, but were unable to withstand the shot of the English and fled before them, leaving their god on the beach. This was immediately seized and held for ransom, the frightened Indians paying for the hideous object with boatloads of venison, wild fowl, bread, oysters, and corn.

During the year that followed, the Indians seem to have grown accustomed to the presence of the English, and remembering no doubt with respect and admiration the prowess shown by the doughty Captain on his last visit, they entertained him right royally during the whole of Christmas week in 1608 when he was weather-bound at Kecoughtan. "The extreme wind, raine, frost, and snowe," says Captain Smith, "caused us to keep Christmas amongst the Savages; where wee were never more merrie, nor fedde on more plentie of good oysters, fish, flesh, wild foule, and good bread; nor never had better fires in England than in the drie, warme, smokie houses of Kecoughtan."

This pleasant picture of the red man's hospitality is the last that has come down to us. When next we hear of Pochins and his warriors, they are believed to have set upon and killed an Englishman, and for this supposed offense Sir Thomas Gates attacked and captured their town and left some English colonists there.

This was in July 1610. To prevent the return of the Indians he built two forts, Charles and Henry, on the shore of the bay, naming the river running from it up into the land "Southampton" in honor of the Earl of Southampton. This name was later contracted to Hampton. Corroborative testimony is borne to the situation of the forts at Kecoughtan by one Don Diego Molina, a Spanish spy taken prisoner at Point Comfort in 1613. In a letter to his government he speaks of two small forts, one of them garrisoned with fifteen soldiers, half a league distant from his prison at the Point.

When Sir Thomas Dale arrived from England in 1611, he found the settlers on Southampton River so improvident as to have neglected their spring planting, and he set all hands to work sowing corn. Possibly they had grown indolent through the prodigality of Nature, for it is said that the colonists at Kecoughtan could live well with half the allowance the rest had from the store because of the extraordinary quantity of fish and game there. Probably, too, the system of working in common, which had been maintained up to this time, had tended to paralyze industry. The alteration made by Sir Thomas Dale, who allotted to each man three acres of cleared ground, requiring him to contribute two and a half barrels of corn to the public store, provided a new incentive to exertion and proved most beneficial. And so the little Colony became in time self-supporting, and we hear nothing more of improvidence nor anything of its history until July 1619, when the House of Burgesses met for the first time at Jamestown. Among the famous requests sent by this body to King James was one which included a petition that the settlement on Southampton River should be relieved of the "heathen name" of Kecoughtan. A reply was received early in the follow-

ing year granting the request and naming the whole of the peninsula between Newport News and the Poquoson River, and extending to Chesapeake Bay, for the King's daughter, Elizabeth. Somewhat contracted, the county remains to this day Elizabeth City, the town of Hampton taking its name from the river.

About twenty families formed the village at this time, the eleven farmers among them raising fine crops of tobacco and corn, besides cultivating peaches, apricots, and other fruits in large orchards. After the great massacre of 1622, the little village increased somewhat in size, owing to additions from outlying plantations where the people feared to remain on account of the Indians.

From all we can learn the town was never in such desperate straits as the neighboring settlement of Jamestown, and its subsequent growth would seem to justify the opinion of those historians who believe that the English would have been wiser had they made Kecoughtan their first Virginia settlement.



## THE JAMESTOWN COLONY

THE English, however, were unable to choose, had they thought of it, the more healthful situation of Kecoughtan for their first settlement in America. When they sailed between the Virginia capes and landed on the southern one which they named Cape Henry (April 26, 1607) they found, on opening<sup>1</sup> the sealed orders of the London Company, that they were directed to settle much further inland "at a suitable spot" on the broad river across the bay.

Before obeying these orders, however, they explored the dense woods near the shore, but were driven back by savages who came stealthily towards them creeping on all fours and carrying their bows in their mouths. Before they could regain the ship several of the company received severe arrow wounds, but they succeeded in so frightening the Indians with their powder and shot they were not attacked again for some time, and were able later to penetrate several miles into the woods. On one occasion the Englishmen found some oysters roasting over a fire; they discovered also a "cannow" made out of a whole tree and measuring forty-five feet in length. Near the boat in the soft mud were quantities of mussels and oysters, and in a cleared place beyond they found strawberries "foure times bigger and better" than those they had known in England.

Satisfied that they had found a land of plenty, Captain Christopher Newport steered his three small ships, the *Sarah Constant*, the *Goodspeed*, and the *Discovery*,

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<sup>1</sup>This is according to the authority of John Smith in his "True Relation" which is accepted by Fiske, Tyler, and most other writers on the history of this period. Some claim that the box was opened at Jamestown.

across the bay to the broad river which flowed into it from the west, and which they at once named the James in honor of their King. At an attractive spot on the north shore of this river, about thirty-five miles above its mouth, they disembarked on a beautiful May day (the 13th), tying their ships to the trees, the water being deep close to the shore. A Virginia spring is full of promise, and all was so fair on this charming morning that the handful of colonists, only about five score, easily forgot the London Company's order "not to settle in a low or moist place" and at once, with a sailcloth above to shield them from the hot sun, gave thanks to God for their safe arrival. Immediately after this the Council was elected (with the exception of John Smith who was temporarily under arrest) in accordance with the directions read at Cape Henry.

Now there were trees to be felled and a fort to be built, for, across a narrow neck of land, they caught glimpses of Indians whom, though they seemed friendly, the settlers did not dare to trust. In a month's time the fort was finished, and inside it the houses stood in straight rows. These were not much more than huts, but they were comfortable and dry, being roofed with marsh grass held down by earth. Finally a chapel was put up in the middle of the enclosure and, though it was but "a homely thing like a barn, it also was roofed with grass and earth, and in it they praised God daily for preserving them thus far."

But alas! the malaria of the swamps they had forgotten to consider attacked many; they did not have enough food; and before the end of the summer they had buried over sixty of the party. When Newport came again from England in January of the following year with one hundred more settlers, he found only thirty-eight of the

original colonists left. One of these, a carpenter named John Laydon, married a maiden who came out with the "Second Supply" in October 1608, and their daughter, Virginia Laydon, was the first English child born in the Jamestown Colony. Perhaps the best known and most adventurous of the early settlers was Captain John Smith, whose visits to the village of the Kecoughtans were described in the last chapter. Another of his exploits resulted in the dramatic scene which has often been reproduced in tableaux. While exploring the Chickahominy he was seized by the Indians and taken to their great chief Powhatan, who was about to execute him when he was rescued by the intercession of the King's beautiful daughter, Pocahontas. The princess after this became very friendly with the colonists, often carrying them food, and later, after living with the English as a hostage for several years, married<sup>1</sup> one of them, John Rolfe, thus becoming the ancestor of many a proud Virginian.

Disasters continued to visit the little Colony. Fire after fire destroyed the flimsy buildings, and in the cold of winter many died of exposure, so that even the palisades were pulled down for firewood. Supplies gave out entirely and the people lived on roots and herbs. The number was reduced from five hundred to sixty in six months.

Finally, in June 1610, they decided to abandon the settlement and started back to England, but they were barely out of sight of the Island when they met the ships of Lord de la Warre, a new governor, who had plenty of provisions, and persuaded them to go back and make a fresh start. New fortifications were now

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<sup>1</sup>In April 1614

built and the houses were repaired. Cedar pews and a walnut altar were placed in the church, and every Sunday it was decorated with flowers. Instead of the system of communism which had prevailed the colonists were given land of their own and were obliged to cultivate it. Industry and thrift began to prevail and a repetition of the famine became well-nigh impossible. Still more settlers arrived and the Colony began to expand.

By 1619 two thousand white persons were living in Virginia, and they called for self-government, being tired of the tyranny of royal governors. Governor Yeardley issued writs for the election of a General Assembly, and the first legislative body in America met in the Jamestown church on July 30 of that year. Just after this meeting, in curious juxtaposition, came the first cargo of Negro slaves; and it was in this year also that there arrived from England a shipload of English maidens as wives for the colonists. Each young woman was free to exercise her choice, but no suitor who met with approval could take his bride unless able to pay the cost of her voyage—one hundred and twenty pounds of tobacco. Thus one year saw in the infant Colony the establishment of the home, of a free representative government, and of the institution of slavery.

With the beginning of the culture of tobacco and the expansion of the Colony, Jamestown came to be chiefly a place for the assembling of the legislature and for holding court. A courthouse was built and in this the House of Burgesses met. At such times the little village almost earned its title of town, but the permanent population after 1623 was only about one hundred persons, who lived in brick houses of fair size and style. The first brick church, whose ruined tower is today the chief relic of



old Jamestown, was built between 1639 and 1647<sup>1</sup>. It was a very plain and unpretentious chapel, rectangular in shape with a high-pitched roof. The aisles were paved with brick and the chancel with tiles. All attempts to increase the size of the town failed and, after being destroyed three times by fire, the second time during Bacon's Rebellion in 1676, it was never entirely rebuilt. The last meeting of the House of Burgesses held in Jamestown was in 1699 in an unknown building. At this session an act was passed removing the seat of government from Jamestown to Middle Plantation, now Williamsburg. For over two hundred years there has been no town on Jamestown Island, but some families continued to live there, among them the Amblers. A daughter of this family, Polly, became the wife of the jurist, John Marshall.

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<sup>1</sup>S. H. Yonge in "The Site of Old Jamestowne." Some authorities disagree with Colonel Yonge in regard to the dates and sites of the Jamestown churches. The weight of authority is in favor of 1639 as the date of the first brick church. See page 16.

### III

#### TODAY ON JAMESTOWN ISLAND

SINCE the island was abandoned the river has done its best to obliterate all traces of the "Cradle of the Republic." Its work was interfered with, however, by patriotic women, under the name of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, who took steps to rescue from oblivion this "first American metropolis." Yet it was not until 1900, after fifty or sixty acres of the island, including the sites of the first landing place and the first and second forts, together with a part of the earliest settlement, had been worn away by the unrestrained action of the water, that this Association succeeded in inducing the Government to build a sea wall to prevent further encroachments by the river. This was begun in 1901 and finished in 1905, having been designed and constructed by Colonel S. H. Yonge, engineer and archeologist. Outside of this breakwater, two hundred and ninety feet from shore, stands a lone cypress tree, which in 1846 was on the shore above high-water mark. Colonel Yonge also carried on in 1903, under the direction of the Association, the excavations which revealed a large block of connected brick foundations extending eastward from the river for about two hundred and forty feet. At low tide it is possible to walk all the way out to the cypress tree on similar brick foundations. The most easterly house has been identified as the State House, built in 1666, the scene of the famous interview between Bacon and Berkeley. The other foundations belonged to the Ludwells and other old families. One who wishes to study Colonel Yonge's work in detail will find his book, "The Site of Old Jamestowne," most valuable.

The work at Jamestown of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities<sup>1</sup> has been far too important to be dismissed with a mere reference. This organization, though established and controlled by Virginia women, has many men as members, and was chartered in 1889. To it the country owes almost the very existence of the upper part of the Island, and the preservation of all that remains of old Jamestown. To this Association, its friends, and other patriotic societies we are indebted for the Jamestown monuments and tablets, and for the careful oversight exercised by the Jamestown Committee, whose present chairman is Mrs. John B. Lightfoot, of Richmond, as well as for the annual and other special memorial exercises held on the Island. Virginia and the entire country owe this organization a deep debt of gratitude.

One who wishes to make a pilgrimage to Jamestown now may follow in the wake of Captain Newport's little vessels, across Hampton Roads<sup>2</sup>, full of historic memories, not only of Colonial times but also of events connected with the great wars of our history; past Newport News at the mouth of the James; and up the river which, could it speak, would have many a pathetic or romantic tale to tell. The names of the places on either bank bring back crowding memories of events in early Colonial days. On the south side, near Surry, stands "Bacon's Castle" (1655) which, though not visible from the river, is one of the most interesting houses in Virginia. It was forti-

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<sup>1</sup>The first president of the Association was Mrs. Fitzhugh Lee, wife of Governor Lee, who served one year, after which Mrs. Joseph Bryan was elected and held the office until her death in 1911. Mrs. J. Taylor Ellyson, of Richmond, was the third president, and is still in office.

<sup>2</sup>Jamestown may be reached more quickly, if less romantically, by the excellent automobile road up or down the Peninsula and the five-mile drive from Williamsburg.

fied by Bacon's friends during his Rebellion. Further on are Basse's Choice, Pace's Pains, Archer's Hope, Martin's Hundred, and many other places that perpetuate the names of early settlers and were represented in the General Assembly. Jamestown had reason to be grateful to the owner of the plantation of Pace's Pains, for it was he who saved the capital in the massacre of 1622, Chanco<sup>1</sup>, a converted Indian of his household, having revealed the plot against the settlers.

On reaching Jamestown Island, either by boat or by automobile, the visitor notices first a tall shaft, similar to the Washington Monument, which was built by the United States Government (on a plot of seventeen acres donated by the A. P. V. A.) to mark the site of the first permanent English colony on our shores. The Association controls twenty-three and a half acres, including the "glebe land," donated by Mr. and Mrs. E. E. Barney who, in 1893, were the sole owners of the Island. The grounds having been entered through handsome wrought-iron gates, the gift of the Colonial Dames of America, State of New York, the visitor is greeted by Pocahontas<sup>2</sup> with arms outstretched in friendly greeting, looking most appropriately towards her old friend, Captain John Smith, whose striking statue<sup>3</sup> stands on the river bank just south of the old fort.

Let us enter at once the church enclosure (the caretaker unlocks the gate, accepting a nominal fee of twenty-five cents for the upkeep of the grounds) and walk through the ruined, ivy-covered tower to the interior of

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<sup>1</sup>A bronze tablet to this Indian hero was placed at Surry Courthouse in 1929 by the A. P. V. A.

<sup>2</sup>This charming statue by Ordway Partridge was erected by the Pocahontas Association of Washington, D. C., in 1922.

<sup>3</sup>Presented by Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Bryan, of Richmond. It is the work of Couper, of Norfolk, and was unveiled on May 13, 1909.



the church, which was very perfectly restored by the Colonial Dames of America and presented to the Association in 1907. A tablet at the tower end commemorates this gift. Here are the foundation walls of three of the five Jamestown churches<sup>1</sup>, and we examine with reverent interest the cobblestone foundations which we are told supported the wooden walls of the third Colonial church, built about 1617, the one in which met the first General Assembly of Virginia in July 1619. We picture the Governor, the Deputy Governor, the Council, and the twenty-two Burgesses walking in dignified procession up the narrow aisle of the little church, as with stern, serious faces they proceed to transact their important business—a different scene indeed from the squalor and misery that filled the little village only nine years before when Lord De la Warre saved the Colony. Was it here, we wonder, that Pocahontas was baptized and here that she was married? Alas! we learn that the little chapel which witnessed these scenes in the life of the Indian maiden who gave a touch of romance to the rude pioneer town, was inside the palisaded fort now buried under the restless waves of the James. It was just yonder, a stone's throw; while still further out in the water is hidden in the sand of the river bottom the spot on which the Jamestown settlers stepped from their ships. No Plymouth Rock this to withstand forever the action of the waves! Close to the church enclosure stands a monument erected by the Norfolk Branch of the Association in honor of this first General Assembly and of Governor Yeardley and his associates.

But let us turn again to the restored church. Here are the tiles in the chancel of the wooden church and above

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<sup>1</sup>S. H. Yonge. See page 12.

them the two sets belonging to the two brick churches built on almost the same foundations.<sup>1</sup> The tower was too massive to be destroyed when the town was fired in Bacon's Rebellion, and still gives proof of its age in the English bond of which it is made and in the loop-holes near its top which indicate that it was used for defense from the Indians. In front of the chancel is a stone which once bore inlaid brasses, the only sample of such a tomb in America. It is thought by many to be the tomb of Governor Yeardley. The great east window above it was copied from St. Luke's, near Smithfield, the oldest Protestant church in continuous use in the country. On the walls are a number of very interesting tablets, which the visitor will enjoy deciphering.

The worshipers who were wont to gather in the old churches now rest in the ancient graveyard outside. Here lie Dr. James Blair, "Commissary of Virginia and some time minister of this parish," and his wife, Sarah, a daughter of Colonel Benjamin Harrison. It is said that a young sycamore starting between their tombstones carried with it, in the strength of its young life, a portion of Mrs. Blair's tombstone to a considerable height. This was accidentally released in 1895, and the tree has nearly closed the cavity, growing meanwhile to an enormous height and shading the whole graveyard. How typical of the gigantic growth of the infant republic born here! All about the old graveyard lie ancient stones, many of them in fragments, which have been collected and the inscriptions restored, so far as possible, by the indefatigable A. P. V. A., and some with their inscriptions quite indecipherable; beyond the enclosure, on the bank of the river, have been found human skele-

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<sup>1</sup>S. H. Yonge. See page 12.

tons lying in such positions as to indicate that the graveyard once extended to the James. We are told that the present lot is about one-third the size of the original, and when we think of the thousands who perished at Jamestown in the early days we are not surprised to learn that human remains have been found in nearly every part of the Island. An iron fence surrounds the churchyard, and just outside is a granite cross placed by the Association to record the visit to Jamestown in 1898 of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church.

Leaving the church we enter the "Confederate Fort" built in 1861 by the order of General Robert E. Lee. Wandering among the grassy mounds of the fort we soon reach a shrine than which nothing could afford a greater contrast to the warlike memories the place awakens. This is a marvelously beautiful bronze tablet of the first celebration of the Holy Communion by English-speaking people on the continent, showing the Rev. Robert Hunt officiating before the handful of worshipers gathered under the historic sailcloth. It is a fine specimen of Gorham's work, and was presented in 1907, one of the many gifts of that tercentennial year, by the Episcopal Dioceses of Virginia, Southern Virginia, and West Virginia. It stands on a rampart of the fort, in a shrine built of ancient brick from a Colonial mill near by. The inscription, in the language of the first settlers, commemorates the lovable qualities and the self-sacrificing services of Rev. Robert Hunt, their rector.

Wandering on we come to the remains of the "north-western bastion" of the old palisaded fort, and soon reach the Rest House and Museum where we may examine various objects of interest and purchase books and pictures relating to Jamestown. Close to the gate by

which the visitor leaves the grounds is a quaint house of Colonial design modeled after the home of Sir Walter Raleigh, in England. It is known as the Yeardley House. Presented to the Association in 1907 by the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, it was later destroyed by a great windstorm, but was rebuilt by the Association from a bequest by the late Miss Mary Custis Lee.

Besides the many gifts of the tercentennial year there were numerous assemblies on the Island while the Jamestown Exposition was in progress at Sewell's Point on Hampton Roads, the most notable being the commemoration of the three-hundredth anniversary of the Jamestown settlement with elaborate ceremonies, when the Governor of Virginia and British Ambassador Bryce were the principal speakers.

The latest important work of the Association was the placing of a bronze tablet, in June 1928, on the dockmaster's house at Blackwall, London, commemorating the sailing from that port on December 19, 1606, of the first Jamestown settlers. It is very beautifully designed and cast by the Gorham Company of New York, the three famous ships appearing in a cluster at the top. The inscription is as follows:

From or near this spot

December 19, 1606

Sailed with 105 "Adventurers"

The *Sarah Constant*, 100 tons, Capt. Christopher

Newport, in supreme command

The *Goodspeed*, 40 tons, Capt. Bartholomew Gosnold

The *Discovery*, 20 tons, Capt. John Ratcliffe

Landed at Cape Henry, Virginia

April 26, 1607



Arrived at Jamestown, Virginia

May 13, 1607

Where these "Adventurers" founded the  
First Permanent English Colony in America

Under the leadership of the intrepid Capt. John Smith,  
Edward Maria Wingfield, President of the Council, and  
the Reverend Robert Hunt, and others.

At Jamestown, July 30, 1619, was convened the first  
Representative Assembly in America.

Erected by the Association for the Preservation  
of Virginia Antiquities, in 1928,

In commemoration.



Photo copyright, D. N. Davidson

Bruton Parish Church, Williamsburg. Restored (1907) in accordance with its original design. The old Jamestown font and the communion silver are among the valued possessions of this church



Photo courtesy Virginia State Chamber of Commerce

The Wythe House, Williamsburg, restored as nearly as possible to its original condition by Dr. W. A. R. Goodwin. It is now the Parish House of Bruton Parish Church



Courtesy George Van Werveke and the New York Times

Historic Williamsburg, once the Capitol of Virginia, will be rebuilt as neatly as possible in the pre-Revolutionary form, and stand as a living memorial of America's Colonial days

## IV

### THE PENINSULA IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

THE end of the first decade of the seventeenth century found on the extreme eastern end of the Virginia peninsula, on the north shore of Hampton Roads, three small English settlements defended from the Indians by four forts. Settlers on arriving from England sometimes touched at Point Comfort where there was a tiny fortification named Fort Algernoune—a collection of thatched cabins, one “slight house,” and a store, the whole defended by seven pieces of artillery and a garrison of forty men. Half a league further on, at Kecoughtan, defended by the two small forts, Charles and Henry, the colonists found more comfortable quarters in which to rest after the long voyage; and then they proceeded to Jamestown, or remained to plant maize and tobacco on the fertile farms bordering the Southampton (Hampton) River, from which Pochins, son of Powhatan, had lately been driven.

Life was easier at Kecoughtan than at Jamestown, but the conditions were of the crudest. The scattered dwelling houses were chiefly cabins built of logs or slabs and carefully fortified by palisades. No man ventured into his fields, particularly after the massacre of 1622, without wearing a shirt of mail and carrying firearms. Tobacco and sassafras were the chief exports, but quantities of maize were raised, and each colonist was compelled by law to plant annually for seven years six mulberry trees for the breeding of silkworms. The climate was believed to offer unusual advantages for silk culture, and men skilled in that industry came from Europe and settled in the borough of Elizabeth City.



French "vignerons," or vinedressers, were imported and established themselves on Chesapeake Bay (at Buckroe) where we find that land patents were granted as early as 1623, many French names occurring in the court records of that time. Neither of these industries, however, seems to have flourished for any length of time, and the colonists settled down to ordinary agricultural pursuits, cultivating their plantations along the bay shore and on both sides of the river with the help of indentured white servants and a few black slaves.

Churches were built early in the history of every settlement, but were at first only rough frame buildings that were later replaced by rectangular brick edifices. In the absence of towns the church became in a sense the centre of the social life of the county, although service was not held regularly and spiritual matters came to be sadly neglected in all the Virginia parishes. The Negroes were at first so few in number that no separate churches were built for them, and they were permitted to attend the parish church, while their children were brought with others for baptism. The rules for the observance of the Sabbath were curiously strict. As early as Argall's time an edict was issued declaring that absence from church on Sundays or holidays should be punished by "confinement for the night and one week's slavery to the Colony; for the second offence the slavery should last a month, and for the third, for a year and a day." About the middle of the century a man of Poquoson Parish who was caught fishing on Sunday was compelled as a punishment to build a bridge for a public road.

Tutors were common in the better families of Virginia in the seventeenth century, and the "parson's school" was a well-established institution. Masters were obliged

to teach their bond apprentices to read and write, and the law was enforced by the vestry under the general supervision of the county court. The following extract from the public records will show what was required:

July 18, 1698

Elizabeth City County.

“Ann Chandler, orphan of Daniel Chandler, bound apprentice to Phyllemon Miller till 18 or day of marriage, to be taught to read a chapter in the Bible, ye Lord’s Prayer and ten commandments, and sempstress work.”

Elizabeth City was one of the eight boroughs into which the Colony was at first divided. In 1624 thirty persons were reported living at Buckroe Beach and 319 in Elizabeth City, including two Negroes; while eight years later we find that there were settlers at “Fox Hill” also. As the century advanced, the typical mansion house of the landed proprietor came to be a frame building of moderate size with a chimney at each end, and containing from six to twelve rooms. The partitions were covered with a thick layer of clay and then whitewashed with lime made from oyster shells. When bricks came into common use (having been made in the Colony in English molds and *not* brought from England) they were used in many cases instead of wood, and a few of these seventeenth-century houses still stand on the peninsula. “Ringfield,” the home of Joseph Ring, of York County, who died in 1703, is one of these. It was customary to fence in the garden with palings to keep out hogs and cattle; and the usual outbuildings, including a dovecot, stable, barn, henhouse, kitchen, milkhouse, and quarters for the servants, stood near the “Great House,” the whole being surrounded by a high palisade. For although by a treaty in 1646 with Necotowance, the successor of

Opechancanough, Powhatan's brother, the Indians had ceded to the English all the territory between the York and the James from the Falls to Kecoughtan, and it was death for an Indian to be found in this territory unless as a messenger wearing a badge of striped cloth, yet the planters lived in continual fear of a new Indian massacre, and took good care to bolt and bar doors and windows, and to secure the gates of the stockades before retiring at night.

Until the middle of the century there were but few black slaves compared with the number of white servants. In 1672 the population had reached 40,000, of whom 6000 were indentured servants, while only one-third as many were slaves. A few Indians were enslaved, but were never so valuable as the Negroes, one of the latter bringing 4500 pounds of tobacco while an Indian was worth but 3000 pounds. Later the price of an adult Negro slave in Elizabeth City County was about twenty-five pounds sterling.

Nails and hinges were very scarce throughout the Colony, and gates were therefore not usual, drawbars, such as are still common in Virginia, being used where they were needed in the rail fences. Travel was done mostly on horseback, the roads being often mere bridle paths or, when wider, being so much worse than the proverbially bad Virginia roads of the nineteenth century, as to be almost impassable for carriages. In 1662 an Act of Assembly was passed ordering roads forty feet wide to be made—"one to the church, one to the courthouse at Jamestown, and one from county to county." There was a ferry across the mouth of the Southampton River, the ferryman being granted the privilege of running it for life on condition that he charged but one penny for the transportation of each passenger.

After the colonists had somewhat recovered from the disorganization caused by the events which culminated in Bacon's Rebellion, one of the first things that engaged their attention was the establishment of towns for store-houses of tobacco. In 1691 in each county, fifty acres of land were purchased by the public officers, and all persons were encouraged to settle on this land who would build a dwelling and warehouse thereupon, each such person being assigned half an acre of land in fee simple for which he was to pay to the county one hundred pounds of tobacco.

It was in the third year of the last decade of the seventeenth century that the first post-office in Virginia was established by Governor Nicholson. There was a central office at the capital and one in each county; the postage for one sheet of paper was three cents for a distance not exceeding eighty miles. At this time the largest personal property inventoried in Elizabeth City County in a single case was worth two hundred and eighty-two pounds sterling. The average value of the land was a quarter of a pound sterling per acre, while in York County it was worth twice as much, and in the newer counties much less.

The end of the century was marked by great prosperity. Besides the planters in Virginia there were tanners, shoemakers, millers, vinedressers, and pitch and tar makers. The people had their churches and free schools, a college<sup>1</sup>, plenty of land, many servants, abundance of fish and game, and a free market in England and the other Colonies for their surplus products. The Indians were far beyond their borders, and although pirates infested the seas their depredations were not so much felt

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<sup>1</sup>William and Mary, whose beginnings are described in the chapter on "Old Williamsburg"



as they were on the Carolina coast. The isolated life on the plantations had developed self-reliance and other manly qualities, together with a love of liberty which had already shown itself in both church and state affairs. The Virginia gentleman could look back on a century of adventure, enterprise, and growth. In secular matters, at least, the Colony was at the height of its prosperity.

## V

### PIRATES OF THE VIRGINIA CAPES

THE seventeenth century was the golden age of piracy in America—a period which produced the most famous buccaneers of history, and whose annals are full of desperate encounters on the high seas which always ended in the triumph of the black flag. There is not much doubt that the English Navigation Acts were responsible for the encouragement of piracy by the early colonies. It is not to be wondered at that when the colonists discovered that they could neither buy nor sell save in an English market which set its own prices, they should have become quite willing to tolerate the lawless traders who could afford to sell for a song what had cost them only hard blows. Neither was it strange that with such encouragement the pirates should rapidly have become bolder and have extended their operations along the whole Atlantic coast.

The history of this time is filled with accounts, on the one hand, of the efforts of the colonists to evade the navigation laws and, on the other, of the struggles of the home government to enforce the law against pirates. Charles Town, in South Carolina, was a favorite resort of the robbers of the sea, and although their welcome varied in warmth from time to time, yet until the last decade of the century piratical vessels found safe anchorage in Charles Town harbor or in the inlets and coves along the coast. During the closing years of the century, however, a rapid change came over public opinion in South Carolina regarding piracy, and Charles Town strung up pirates at the entrance of her harbor, scarcely waiting to hurry through a formal trial. But, driven from South

Carolina by the enforcement of severe laws, the sea-robbers harried the North Carolina coast, and were concealed and befriended by some of the highest officials.

From the new rendezvous they made expeditions to the Virginia capes and even to the New England coast. In the year 1700 a piratical vessel was seen to enter between Cape Charles and Cape Henry, and was reported to the *Shoreham*, a fifth-rate man-of-war lying in Hampton Roads. Governor Nicholson chanced to be at Kecoughtan at the time, and hearing the news went on board the *Shoreham* and was present at the engagement between the ships, which resulted in the surrender of the pirate. One is carried back in imagination to that eventful twenty-ninth of April 1700, by the epitaph still to be seen on a flat, black slab on Pembroke Farm near Hampton—the site of one of the early churches—to the memory of gallant Peter Heyman:

“This stone was given by His Excellency, Francis Nicholson, Esq., Lieutenant and Governor-General of Virginia, in memory of Peter Heyman, Esq., grandson to Sir Peter Heyman of Summerfield in ye county of Kent—he was collector of customs in ye lower district of James River, and went voluntarily on board ye king’s ship *Shoreham* in pursuit of a pyrate who greatly infested this coast—after he had behaved himself 7 hrs. with undaunted courage, was killed with a small shot, ye 29 day of April 1700. In the engagement he stood next the Governor upon the quarter deck, and was here honorably interred by his order.”

Tradition says that Peter Heyman was led to join the *Shoreham* in its fight against the pirate ship from a desire to avenge the death of his sweetheart who had been killed a day or two before (accidentally, let us hope) by a volley fired by the pirates into the pleasure craft in which she was sailing.

Early in 1717 a notorious sea-robber by the name of Stede Bonnet—a weathy man of Barbadoes who had been driven by an unhappy marriage into the “humour of going a pyrating”—made his first cruise off the capes of Virginia in a sloop called the *Revenge*, and captured a number of merchant vessels, plundering and burning them and sending their crews ashore. He led an adventurous life filled with all manner of crimes, desperate sea-fights, and hairbreadth escapes, and was finally executed at Charles Town after one of the most famous trials in the history of the Colony.

On one of his cruises Bonnet fell in with another famous pirate—perhaps the most disreputable that ever lived—whose name has always been associated with Virginia, albeit more on account of the grewsome trophy which a brave soldier forced him to contribute to the Colony than for any desperate or bloody deeds committed against the Virginians. Blackbeard must have been a revolting monster in appearance; in fact his ambition was to resemble the devil as closely as possible. He received his name from the fact that he wore a black beard of extraordinary length which he also allowed to grow entirely up to his eyes. He was in the habit of twisting it with ribbons into small tails and turning them up about his ears. When about to engage in a fight he would stick lighted matches under his hat on each side of his face and so make himself look like the real demon that he was. He wore a sling over his shoulders in which he carried three brace of pistols hanging in holsters.

But even this wild sea-robber had occasional longings for a quieter life, for he took advantage of the proclamation of George the First offering pardon to all pirates who would surrender themselves within a year, and gave himself up to Governor Eden, of North Carolina, tak-



ing the oath of allegiance to the Crown. It was while living thus in "respectable" idleness that he took unto himself his thirteenth wife—a young girl of sixteen! The attractions of the old life proved too strong for Blackbeard, however, and after a few months he went to sea again under the black flag. In the Bay of Honduras he met Stede Bonnet and joined forces with him, but, soon discovering that the gentleman from Barbadoes knew nothing of seamanship and was held in contempt by his crew, Blackbeard coolly deposed him, gave him a subordinate position on another vessel, added the *Revenge* to his own fleet, and making Ocracoke Inlet in North Carolina his headquarters, again spread terror along the coast. After committing several piracies near the Virginia capes he appeared once more before Charles Town, captured all outgoing merchant vessels, and imprisoned a number of its distinguished citizens, using them to enforce the most outrageous demands on the town. He then sailed back to his headquarters and, after taking a number of prizes, shared his plunder with Governor Eden, thus securing immunity from punishment.

The North Carolina planters now became so exasperated by Blackbeard's depredations that they determined to be rid of him and, knowing that they could hope for no redress from their own Governor, they applied to Governor Spotswood of Virginia for assistance, which was promptly given. A proclamation was at once issued placing a price on the head of Blackbeard, and officers were dispatched in command of two sloops to bring the outlaw to Virginia, dead or alive. All the world knows the story of Lieutenant Maynard's brave fight on the deck of his sloop in the shallow waters of Ocracoke Inlet when twelve of his men were killed and twenty-two wounded,

while he himself engaged Blackbeard in a fierce, hand-to-hand struggle which finally ended in the pirate's death after he had received twenty-five wounds. With Blackbeard's head nailed to his bowsprit and fifteen of the pirate crew in irons, Maynard sailed back in triumph between the Virginia capes. Tradition says that the pirate's head was exposed on a pole at the end of a sandy point on the west side of Hampton Creek. The spot is known to this day as "Blackbeard's Point," and the road near Williamsburg where thirteen of Maynard's prisoners were hanged in chains is known as Pirates' Road or Gallows Row.

It is a curious fact, recently discovered, and attested in the valuable monograph on "The Carolina Pirates and Colonial Commerce" issued by Johns Hopkins University, that although Blackbeard was known as Ned Teach, or Thatch, of Bristol, his real name was Drummond as vouched for by "one of his own family and name, of respectable standing, in Virginia near Hampton." It is the more curious because the old mansion house directly opposite Blackbeard's Point was owned for many years by a branch of the Drummond family, possibly distant connections of the famous freebooter.

It is not strange perhaps that various ballads should have been written about the notorious Blackbeard, certainly not that his story should have appealed to a boy of thirteen fond of scribbling verses. Edward Everett Hale tells us in the *New England Magazine* for June 1898 that he discovered in a recently published volume called "Real Sea Songs" a ballad about Blackbeard written by Benjamin Franklin when he was thirteen.

## VI

### OLD WILLIAMSBURG

THE capital of the Virginia Colony was transferred in 1699 from Jamestown to Williamsburg, seven miles away, in a "more salubrious situation." "Middle Plantation," as it was called, was at this time but thirty-six years old, and life there was most primitive. Stools and benches and strong four-posters constituted the furniture of the rude pioneer cabins, and the horse trough served as the family wash-basin. But after it became the capital conditions improved rapidly, substantial houses appeared, and silver as well as pewter began to shine on polished mahogany sideboards.

Even before this the colonists, most of whom were not in sympathy with Governor Berkeley when he "thanked God there were no free schools in Virginia and hoped there would be none for a hundred years," had begun to plan seriously for some opportunity for higher education if only that they need not be at the expense of sending their sons to England when they wished to study for a profession. To be sure, Harvard College had been founded, but to go from Virginia to Massachusetts in those days was almost as much of an undertaking as to go to England. So in 1691 Commissary Blair (the same whose body now lies in the ancient graveyard at Jamestown) went across the water seeking a charter for a college. He succeeded in obtaining an appropriation of two thousand pounds in money, and twenty thousand acres of land, with a tax of "a penny a pound on all tobacco exported from Maryland and Virginia, together with the fees and profits arising from the office of surveyor-general." The Commissary returned triumphant,

with his charter and his contributions and was made the first president of William and Mary College (1693), which office he held for fifty years. The College was for some time as English as its name, the instructors being appointed by the Bishop of London who retained for himself the office of Chancellor. It was not alone for the education of their children that the Virginia colonists were solicitous. They felt a responsibility for the Indians among whom they were living, and very early in the history of William and Mary the income from the English landed estate of Brafferton was set aside for the use of the Indians, a special building by that name being put up for them. The first Commencement of the College was held in 1700 and excited much interest, the roads being filled with coaches and the river with sloops from the outlying plantations and even from New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, while the Indians in gala costume came in afoot and added to the picturesqueness of the scene.

The main building of the College was designed by Sir Christopher Wren, and was a substantial brick one of two stories with dormer windows in the roof; it contained besides dormitories and classrooms, a library, and a chapel extending to the rear. Here the General Assembly met until 1704 when the capitol was built at the opposite end of the straight, mile-long Duke of Gloucester Street. This was also a plain, two-story brick building, but in the form of the letter H, with a portico in front. Hard by was the Raleigh Tavern, a wooden building, one full story in height with an attic above lit by eight dormer windows in each wing. There was an entrance door near the centre of each front, and over one of these a leaden bust of Sir Walter Raleigh. Its most famous apartment was the Apollo Room, a large ban-



queting room with deep fireplaces at each end and carved wainscoting under the windows and over the mantel. In this room on December 5, 1776, the Phi Beta Kappa Society was founded.

When Spotswood became governor in 1714, the Governor's Palace, midway between the College and the Capitol on an estate of four hundred acres, was added to this group of historic buildings. In a public square in the centre of the town Governor Spotswood built also, in obedience to an Act of the Burgesses, the octagonal brick Powder Horn with its quaint, steep-pitched roof. When first built it was surrounded by an outer wall and formed a complete magazine, with powder room, armory, and blacksmith shop.

About this same time, in 1715, Bruton Church was completed, being built on plans furnished by the same energetic and versatile Governor Spotswood. This church was the centre of the interesting group of buildings in Old Williamsburg. Cruciform in shape, the long arm abutted on Palace Green and stretched along Duke of Gloucester Street, having a tower at the western end towards the college. It was built, like all the other early public buildings, of brick made in English molds, and over these, especially at the eastern end, the ivy soon threw a mantle of green. The windows were made of small, square panes of plain white glass, and most of them are still unbroken in spite of the ravages of two wars. The churchyard was enclosed by a low, Colonial brick wall the land being the gift of Sir John Page, ancestor of the former owners of "Rosewell" in Gloucester County. Flagstone walks led to the church doors and the aisles within were paved with the same material. Up these aisles from the tower entrance walked the stately Burgesses when they met for prayer before pro-

ceeding to the business of state; and here walked also each Sunday and on fast days the court processions—the Governor and the Council of State in their gorgeous robes and carrying emblazoned banners. The Governor's pew, elevated, large, and square, and canopied with rich, crimson velvet, occupied one of the corners made by the meeting of the transepts and nave, and the high pulpit with its sounding board was placed on the opposite corner, the choir behind it as in English cathedrals, and the chancel at the eastern end.

It was a gay little capital—Old Williamsburg—so gay that it was said to resemble the Court of St. James. Withal it was picturesque. Gentlemen rode dressed in bright-colored velvets and ruffles, the clergy in dignified black, and the judges in scarlet, while the mechanics appeared in red-flannel shirts and with leathern aprons over buckskin breeches. The students of William and Mary wore academic dress. It was the age of the hoop-skirt, and on dress occasions, such as a ball at Governor Spotswood's, the ladies wore over the hoopskirt trailing gowns of heavy brocade, while their hair was dressed very high and adorned with feathers, ribbons, and lace. The Colonial governors lived in great state, driving to public functions in carriages drawn by six milk-white horses. Their families and those of the House of Burgesses added much to the brilliancy of the social life. In the middle of the eighteenth century theatre going was added to the list of Colonial entertainments, the *Charming Sally* bringing from England a company of players in charge of Lewis Hallam, who presented "The Merchant of Venice" to Williamsburg society.

But life there was not a mere butterfly existence. In attendance at William and Mary were the makers of the

nation—Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence; Harrison, Braxton, Nelson, and Wythe, four of its signers; Peyton Randolph, President of the First Continental Congress; and many others prominent in Revolutionary history. Washington received his commission as civil engineer at this college and was its first American Chancellor. It was in Williamsburg in her mansion adjoining the Six Chimney Lot that he wooed and won the Widow Custis. At the capitol Patrick Henry was a prominent figure, and his emphatic words, "If that be treason, make the most of it," resounded from its walls. With Washington and Jefferson in legislative assembly, in 1769, he drew up the famous resolutions asserting that the people of Virginia could be taxed only by their own representatives, and declaring it to be both lawful and expedient for all the Colonies to unite in protest against any violation of American rights. Henry was one of those protesting citizens who, when the Assembly was dissolved by Lord Botetourt and again when it was disbanded by Lord Dunmore, retired to the Apollo Room of the Raleigh Tavern, the last time passing those resolutions which resulted in the assembling of the First Continental Congress. The Apollo Room of the Raleigh probably witnessed "more scenes of brilliant festivity and political excitement than any other single apartment in North America."

Little Williamsburg was the birthplace of the Revolution. In other parts of the Colony the fires of revolution smouldered until fanned into flame by Dunmore's stealing of the powder and his wanton act in the burning of Norfolk. Then indeed the demand for liberty became imperative and a resolution was unanimously passed instructing the Virginia delegates to ask Congress to de-



Photo courtesy Virginia State Chamber of Commerce

The oldest building of William and Mary College before its restoration, begun in 1929. In the foreground stands the old statue of Lord Botetourt whose body rests beneath the college chapel with those of Bishop Madison, Sir John Randolph, and others prominent in Colonial history.



Photo courtesy Virginia State Chamber of Commerce

The rear of the Christopher Wren building of William and Mary College, Williamsburg. Here the General Assembly met from 1700 until 1704





Photo courtesy Virginia State Chamber of Commerce

The Apollo Room of the Raleigh Tavern, Williamsburg. This room probably witnessed more scenes of brilliant festivity and political excitement than any other single apartment in North America. In this room on December 5, 1776, the Phi Beta Kappa Society was founded



The oldest customhouse in America, Yorktown

clare the United Colonies free and independent States. When the news was received in Williamsburg the town went wild, church bells were rung, guns fired, and the British flag was hauled down from the capitol, the thirteen stripes being run up in its stead.

After this demonstration things seem to have quieted down at the little capital; the scene had shifted to the Northern battlefields. In 1779 the College was reorganized by Jefferson and the elective system introduced. High tide had been reached in its affairs. During the Revolution it lost its most important sources of revenue and did not regain its former prestige until the end of the nineteenth century. Virginia did not become the battlefield until Cornwallis began his retreat down the Peninsula in June 1781. Lafayette followed him closely, and on July 6 an action took place at Green Spring, once Governor Berkeley's country home, where the Americans were repulsed. Cornwallis then occupied Yorktown, and the surrender followed in October. At this time Bruton Church and the Christopher Wren Building at the College were used as hospitals. During its occupancy by the French Surgeon-General, the house of the President of William and Mary, a fine specimen of eighteenth-century architecture, was accidentally destroyed by fire but was restored by King Louis XVI from his private funds. This house was used at one time as the headquarters of Cornwallis. Washington later had his headquarters in the home of Chancellor Wythe on Palace Green.

After the Revolution and the transference of the capital to Richmond, Williamsburg lost its importance, and the visitor to the little city, up to the beginning of the twentieth century, found it a dreamy, charming, restful

spot, quiet and aristocratic—its Court and Palace Greens dotted with buttercups among which cattle browsed, the old churchyard overgrown and its stones crumbling away. The site of the “magnificent” Palace, with its cupola illuminated on the King’s birth-night, was occupied by a free school of the American Republic, and the Palace grounds had disappeared. In place of the famous Raleigh Tavern rose a typical small-town drygoods store, and though the Duke of Gloucester Street still stretched from the college to the site of the capitol, whose foundations were marked out by the Colonial Chapter of the A. P. V. A., it was grass grown, and the governors’ handsome carriages and milk-white horses were missing. Chancellor Wythe’s house remained, haunted by many ghosts, also the homes of Peyton and Edmund Randolph, and of William Wirt, Sir John Randolph, and John Blair, with their quaint stone steps, Colonial doorways, and brass knockers, with their dormer windows, “offices,” and old rose gardens.

Bruton Church was “remodeled” in 1840 so as to be fairly unrecognizable with its partition midway of the nave and the chancel against the partition. The town clock which was put into the steeple at that time ceased for many years to mark the flight of time, but was finally put in order so that it struck the hours. The old church was again used as a hospital during the Civil War, after the battle of Williamsburg.

William and Mary’s main building was burned for the third time in 1862 by Federal troops after ninety per cent of the students had left for the war. But it was rebuilt on the old walls and looked much as it did before. Brafferton Hall was not long an Indian school, but continued to be used as one of the college buildings.

## VII

### PRESENT-DAY WILLIAMSBURG

**I**N the first year of the twentieth century there came to Williamsburg as rector of Bruton Church a man to whom the historic associations of the little town appealed with great force—the Rev. W. A. R. Goodwin, D.D. He devoted much time to investigating historic facts in connection with his church, and in 1903 published a book embodying these called “Bruton Church.” Greatly dissatisfied with the unfortunate “remodeling” (in 1840) of the beautiful old structure, he determined to have it restored, if sufficient funds could be procured, in accordance with its original design; and this was accomplished by 1907, the year of the Jamestown Exposition when many visitors had the pleasure of seeing this fine example of a Colonial church.

The Governor’s pew, with its Royal coat-of-arms, was given back its canopy of rich crimson velvet as the gift of a member of the Spotswood family. The pews have been made memorials to distinguished patriots and statesmen of the Revolutionary period. President Roosevelt gave the church a lectern on which rests a Bible, the gift of King Edward of England, presented by the Bishop of London at the time of the meeting of the General Convention in October 1907. The Jamestown font is one of the valued possessions of Bruton Church, which has also fallen heir to the Jamestown communion service bearing the date 1661, and owns two others which are highly prized—the Queen Anne set, of silver gilt beautifully chased, and the King George service of solid silver bearing the royal insignia. Underneath the church and



in the old graveyard lie buried many men and women whose names are known to history, and one may wander for hours there deciphering the interesting old inscriptions and living in the past.

In 1909 Dr. Goodwin left Williamsburg to become rector of St. Paul's Church in Rochester, New York, but he returned to the old Virginia town in 1923 with his interest in no way dimmed by time or distance. He now devoted his attention to helping develop the College of William and Mary where he held the chair of Biblical Literature and Religious Education. A period of new life and usefulness at the College had begun in 1888 when it was reorganized by President Lyon G. Tyler who did remarkable pioneer work. Under his administration the endowment of the College was increased from \$20,000 to \$150,000, its opportunities were extended to women, and it was made a State institution in 1906, all of which resulted in increased appropriations and attendance. After long and patiently investigating the early records Dr. Tyler published the only authoritative history of Williamsburg. To him also belongs the credit for the establishment and maintenance, for twenty-seven years, of the *William and Mary Historical Quarterly*, which is now under the direction of the present president, Dr. Julian A. C. Chandler, and the librarian, Dr. E. G. Swem, and is an important factor in maintaining historical interest in Williamsburg.

After thirty-one years of devoted service Dr. Tyler in 1919 was made president emeritus of William and Mary and was succeeded by Dr. Chandler. Under his administration the number of students increased rapidly, the standards for entrance and for degrees were materially raised, new buildings were erected, and new professorships were created. When Dr. Goodwin became a

member of the Faculty in 1923 the College was ready for a determined drive for other much-needed buildings as well as more adequate equipment and endowment. He was made Director of the Endowment Campaign, and since 1924 the material growth of William and Mary has been phenomenal, no less than eight very large, beautiful, and substantial buildings having been erected, most of them as memorials to distinguished men or women. Since 1920 the enrollment has increased from 131 to 3400, including summer and extension classes (1929), while the curriculum has been vastly enriched and the endowment increased until the ancient College of William and Mary is now considered one of the finest and most progressive institutions in the State.

The campus is enclosed by a low Colonial brick wall, and in the walk half-way between the gate and the College still stands the old statue of Lord Botetourt whose body rests beneath the College chapel with those of Bishop Madison, Sir John Randolph, and others prominent in Colonial history. This chapel, a part of the Christopher Wren or "Main" Building, is being restored (1929), as that historic edifice is included in the plans for the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg. The first-floor plans of the old building, drawn by Thomas Jefferson, were found in the Huntington Library in California. Research in old records by Dr. Swem brought to light sufficient data to make possible the reproduction of the building erected after the fire of 1705 which stood until the fire of 1859. On the pillars of the proposed iron gate at the entrance will be placed leaden images of King William and Queen Mary who granted the College charter in 1693.

The increase in the College enrollment necessitated an addition to the building housing its extremely valuable

library. The State of Virginia appropriated \$100,000 for this addition which gave the Library a capacity for 300,000 volumes. The Virginia collection here is already one of the best in the United States. The walls of the reading rooms, which can accommodate 450 readers at one time, are lined with historic engravings and maps, and a very wonderful series of original portraits of Colonial Virginians, the largest in the State. In a fire-proof treasure room are stored about 50,000 manuscripts and 500 unusually rare books, a collection which is growing rapidly as old Virginia families contribute valuable letters and papers. A considerable number of old manuscript records of the College are still in existence and in these may be found the names of famous men who were students at William and Mary, such as Jefferson, Monroe, Marshall, and others. One of the library's treasures is a copy of Blackstone's Commentaries published in 1772 with John Marshall's signature. It has also a file of the *Virginia Gazette* for the year 1775, and the minutes of the Phi Beta Kappa Society from the time of its organization in 1776 in the Apollo Room of the Raleigh Tavern until its meetings were discontinued in 1781, due to the Yorktown campaign.

In 1927 Dr. Goodwin again took over the rectorship of Bruton Church in addition to his other duties, and at the same time conceived the idea of entirely restoring Old Williamsburg, bringing back, as far as possible, the ancient atmosphere by which the houses were once surrounded. He began with the old Wythe house, which was purchased by the Colonial Dames of America, Chapter III, restored the interior in careful fashion in consultation with the authorities of the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and is now using it as a parish house and office. The lower floor is used as a

museum, and is open to the public. The Paradise House was also partially restored, and Dr. Goodwin has succeed in enlisting the interest and backing of Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., through whose generous kindness and patriotic interest Williamsburg will be preserved and restored. The complete restoration of the Colonial City is contemplated under conditions which will guarantee the preservation of these historic shrines.

The plan includes the restoration of the Christopher Wren Building, the old Capitol, the Colonial Governor's Palace, the Raleigh Tavern, the Duke of Gloucester Street, Francis Street, the Court Green, and the Palace Green, as well as the Colonial surroundings of the old Powder Horn, which has seen many vicissitudes, having been alternately a market, a church, and a dancing school. It is now a museum, and contains memorial windows to Nathaniel Bacon, Jr., "the rebel," and Alexander Spotswood, "the best governor Virginia ever had." It is also proposed to build an inn in the Old English style which a good authority says is to be called the Golden Horseshoe. Dr. Goodwin expects the restoration to take at least five years, and at the end of that time he hopes to publish a book describing it.

When completely restored, Williamsburg will have recovered its charm, now largely lost through the commercializing of the Duke of Gloucester Street, with its ugly lighting system. It has always had very charming interiors—large rooms furnished with antique furniture, paintings of ancestors by famous artists of the last century, delightful old brasses, curious bits of china, and here and there a Chippendale chair or staircase. At least forty-five of these old Colonial homes will be retained. The old Garrett place near the site of the capitol was spoken of in a *Virginia Gazette* of 1763. The



oldest part of the house has a quaint staircase; the only one like it in Virginia is at Lower Brandon on the James. The front porch is paved with square red-brick tiles like those in one of the old chancels at Jamestown, and its door has a curious knocker of colored brass showing its antiquity. This house has already been restored, as have also the Barlow House on the Duke of Gloucester Street and the Hallam and Bracken Houses on Francis Street.

## VIII

### THE PENINSULA IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

THE luxurious manner of living, begun in the Virginia Colony in the last decade of the seventeenth century, continued for more than half of the eighteenth. The pioneer with firearms became "a ruffled dignitary riding in his coach and four"; log huts and unpretentious brick dwellings gave place to fine manor houses; forests disappeared and were replaced by cultivated plantations; the number of tobacco fields increased and with them the number of black slaves; the tobacco was carried to England and the ships returned laden with rich cargoes to discharge their treasures at their owners' wharves. It was a leisurely time. The men were deliberate both in work and pleasure; they lingered over their wine and their pipes; they drove or rode long distances with their families to the plantations of their friends and remained for extended visits. The women rode to hounds with the men and were as much at home on the water as on land, handling a tiller or trimming a sail as skillfully as their brothers.

Many of the planters gathered in the capital during the winter, and in the *Virginia Gazette* of that period we find announcements of their pleasures. "This evening will be performed," we read, "by the young Gentlemen of the College, the Tragedy of Cato." \* \* \* "Last Saturday being His Majesty's birthday, the same was observed here with firing of guns, illuminations, and other demonstrations of loyalty, and at night there was a handsome appearance of Gentlemen and Ladies at His Honour the Governor's, where was a Ball and an Elegant Entertainment." That this was not the way "the other

half" lived is shown by sundry advertisements and notices. Two Negro men—runaway slaves—are advertised for; two others are hanged for robbery; a Negro woman is burned for killing her mistress; an Indian servant has committed a misdemeanor; and down in Princess Anne County a "witch" is ducked. Yet on the whole it was a marvelously happy and picturesque age. The slaves, as a rule, were well treated and they were devoted to their masters' interests. Lower down on the Peninsula the plantations were small and the slaves few in number. The 'longshoremen lived by their nets and the small landholders by their farms. There were then no telegraphs, railways, or electric lights. In 1710 a postal service was established that carried letters once a fortnight from Williamsburg to Philadelphia, but it was not until twenty years later that through the efforts of Governor Spotswood, then Postmaster-General for the American Colonies, a regular mail service was started between New England and the James River. The time from Philadelphia to Williamsburg was reduced to one week, but for points further south the postrider did not start until enough mail had accumulated to make the journey worth while.

This same Governor Spotswood was perhaps the most picturesque figure of this picturesque age. He arrived in Virginia just one hundred years after Lord De la Warre built the two forts on Hampton River to protect the infant town of Kecoughtan. He is remembered as one of the best of the Colonial governors, known far beyond the borders of Virginia for his energy and love of justice. We have an interesting glimpse of the Indians of Tidewater Virginia when we read of Spotswood's visit in 1716 to his mission school at Fort Christanna. "Here," says John Esten Cooke, "there were

seventy-seven Indian children at school. They were taught to write and to read the Bible and prayerbook. Sixty youths were present (at the time of the Governor's visit) with feathers in their hair and ears, their faces painted with blue and vermilion, and with blue and red blankets around their shoulders." In the same year that the Governor visited his Indian mission he led a gallant expedition of Virginia cavaliers into the mountains that formed the western boundary of the province. From the time that the spirited soldier-governor thus founded the order of the "Knights of the Golden Horseshoe" until his death at Temple Farm near Yorktown in 1740, his life was one of great activity and usefulness. Now we hear him asking his Burgesses why they continue to sit day after day and draw their pay for doing nothing if the country is too poor, as they claim, to carry out needed measures for the public good. Later we look on with mingled amusement and regret when he is worsted in his quarrel with Commissary Blair and obliged to retire from office. Again we read with warm interest the story of his happy family life in the "enchanted castle" at Germanna, as told by Colonel William Byrd of Westover. Governor Spotswood was buried at Temple Farm, the former name of the Moore House near Yorktown.

By the middle of the eighteenth century the end of the Colonial period was in sight. The free life of the new world had created new modes of thought, and old ideas of government began to be seriously questioned. Democracy became popular and the idea of uniting for resistance to the demands of the mother country began to agitate the Colonies. Aristocratic Virginia sounded the alarm and it was her sons who were the great leaders of the Revolution—Patrick Henry, Jefferson, Mason, Washington, Lee, Pendleton, and a host of others.



Among them was George Wythe, a native of Elizabeth City County, whose home, Chesterville, and his town house in Williamsburg still stand. He was an eminent jurist, Chancellor of Virginia for more than twenty years, and one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

## IX

### THE VIKINGS OF VIRGINIA

THE progress of revolutionary thought in the American Colonies during the latter half of the eighteenth century is well known. Every school boy has his Revolutionary hero and knows by heart the celebrated speeches of the famous Virginia leaders. What American has not followed with breathless interest the stirring history of his country's struggle for independence? Who has not kept pace with Jefferson's thought from the time he listened—a young law student—outside the door as Patrick Henry thundered against the right of the mother country to vest the power of taxation in any other body than the Colonial Assembly, to that other time, more than ten years later, when he drafted the Declaration of Independence which transformed Englishmen into Americans? Who has not wintered with Washington in Valley Forge and exulted with him at Yorktown and been proud to honor his memory as the Father of his Country? But familiar as is the story of the Revolution, there is one chapter that has often been omitted, and it is one that is intimately connected with the history of the Lower Virginia Peninsula—the record of the gallant State Navy that did such honorable service in the bays and creeks and rivers of Tidewater Virginia.

By the winter of 1774 Virginia was under arms, a company of militia having been formed in every county, ready on Washington's order to march at a minute's notice. In the spring was fought in Massachusetts the Battle of Lexington, and the very next day the haughty Lord Dunmore—"the worst governor Virginia ever had"—secretly ordered the gunpowder stored in the

magazine at Williamsburg to be carried on board the man-of-war *Magdalen* then lying in James River. This act threw Virginia into commotion and called out the minute-men, obliging Dunmore to leave the dangerous little capital. The State being without an executive and Washington having been called to take command of the Continental Army, a Committee of Safety was appointed in Virginia with Edmund Pendleton as Chairman. Patrick Henry was chosen commander-in-chief of the Virginia forces. His famous militia carried for their flag a picture of a rattlesnake with the words, "Don't Tread on Me," and the men wore green hunting shirts bearing the words "Liberty or Death"; it is said that they carried tomahawks and scalping knives in their belts and wore buck tails in their caps. Dunmore in his wrath offered freedom to all slaves who would join the King's party, and sailed with his royalist friends to the shores of the Chesapeake and the rivers that make into the lower peninsula, ravaging plantations and laying waste the country. Elizabeth City County was especially exposed to his attacks and to those of British privateers. Many homes were burned to the ground, crops were destroyed, and slaves were carried off to the West Indies. Dunmore's last act was to bombard the city of Norfolk and burn it to the ground. The whole country was aroused and the Committee of Safety was authorized to procure armed vessels for the protection of the coast.

In April 1776 there appeared in the *Virginia Gazette* a call for ships' carpenters, and the building of the Virginia Navy went on apace. Many of the ships were built at Hampton, some in Norfolk, some in Accomac, some at the shipyard on the Chickahominy. Others belonged to the merchant marine and were purchased and armed for the State service, the new rigging having always "the

rogue's yarn" to distinguish it from that of the merchant ships. For "a hundred wild sea-blown years" had adventurers, pirates, and sea captains sailed their ships up and down the Chesapeake and in and out among its sinuous waterways; fishermen lined the shores and had explored in their canoes every inlet and cove; it was not difficult therefore to man the new ships with watermen of every description, only too eager to chase the privateers and to defend their homes. They became the Vikings of Virginia, darting hither and thither in their fast-sailing craft and surprising and capturing many a plunder-laden ship.

A board of Naval Commissioners was appointed in May 1776 to direct the affairs of the navy, and by mid-summer a fleet of seventy vessels was in commission. It was rightly called a "mosquito fleet," for the vessels were all small, and they were probably the fastest sailers in the world—except the lateens of the Mediterranean. Then they were of such light draught that they were perfectly at home in the shallow inlets, where they gave the enemy many a sting that was long remembered. The fleet included frigates, brigs, brigantines, schooners, sloops, galleys, and armed pilot boats and barges. Some were row-galleys, one-half decked over and provided with high and strong bulwarks. These galleys looked like huge water spiders, being broad and flat and usually rigged as schooners with two or three masts. They were used as "lookouts," or flying sentinels, as well as for transports for troops, each being large enough to carry a company of sixty-eight men with arms and baggage. The average length of deck was seventy feet and they were heavily armed, carrying two twenty-four or thirty-two-pounders in bow and stern and seven smaller guns along each side. The largest ships carried thirty-two



guns each; one of them—the *Gloucester*—was a prison ship and was moored in Hampton Creek or in Elizabeth River. The ships of the Virginia Navy sailed as fleets on only two occasions, once in Hampton Roads to give help to the troops in Portsmouth and once in James River. In each case the fleet consisted of fourteen ships. As Virginia had no distinctive State flag it is probable that Patrick Henry's famous banner was used in the navy. Only one of the Virginia ships survived the war—the gallant *Liberty*—which fought in twenty distinct actions and was twice sunk in the rivers. Instead of being retained by the State, as she should have been, she was sold to a trader in the West Indies.

Of all the brave and dashing Virginia Vikings, Commodore James Barron of Hampton was doubtless the master spirit. He was born in 1740 when his father, Captain Barron, was Commander at Point Comfort. Here he lived for nine years, when a hurricane destroyed the fortifications and the family moved further up the peninsula. The boy James began his sea life when he was but ten years old; he soon became second mate and later was given command of a small vessel, the *Kecoughtan*. He and his brother, Richard Barron, became pilots and with their swift boats gave Governor Dunmore and his Tory friends much trouble. On one occasion, before the formation of the State Navy, they were chased into Hampton by the British schooner *Otter*, which however ran aground. They immediately attacked and burned her, the crew escaping. In revenge for this act, angry Captain Squires appeared in Hampton Creek with six armed sloops and made an attack on the town. But the townspeople, anticipating this, had applied for help to the Committee of Safety. One hundred Culpepper minute-men responded and, with the Hampton militia, among



Photo courtesy Virginia State Chamber of Commerce

Yorktown Monument. Erected by the Federal Government in commemoration of the surrender of Cornwallis



Photo copyright, D. N. Davidson

The Nelson House, Yorktown, now called York Hall



Photo copyright, D. N. Davidson

The Moore House, Yorktown. The spot where one of the most momentous events in the history of America took place—the discussion of the terms of Cornwallis's surrender

whom was James Barron, concealed themselves behind bushes and houses and made a fierce resistance, sinking or destroying five of the sloops. It was in the summer of the following year that the Virginia Navy was organized, and Hampton was not again attacked by the British.

The story of the "web-footed Barrons" would make almost a naval history. James Barron the elder was made one of the three commodores of the State Navy, and in 1779 became senior officer, receiving his commission as "commander-in-chief of all the armed forces of the Commonwealth" from Colonel Thomas Whiting of Hampton, who was President of the Naval Board<sup>1</sup>. Commodore Barron rendered Virginia valuable service during the Revolutionary War, not only in his official capacity but by loaning money and stores and by aiding in procuring supplies for the army, particularly during the siege of Yorktown. He served with his brother, Captain Richard Barron, during the whole war, commanding the famous ship *Liberty* in many gallant fights. The *Patriot*, which also had an interesting history, was commanded by Captain Richard Barron for at least a portion of the time. The two sons of Commodore James Barron—James, the younger, and Samuel—were both attached to the State Navy and afterwards won distinction in the United States Navy, both becoming commodores and being conspicuous for their bravery and for their executive ability.

Lieutenant Cunningham of the Virginia Navy, who when a prisoner in Portsmouth made such a daring and romantic escape, running the guard and swimming the river to join his wife in the woods on the other side, was also a native of Hampton.

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<sup>1</sup>This commission, signed by Jefferson, is now in possession of Mrs. Janie Hope Marr of Lexington, Virginia, one of the descendants of Commodore Barron.



No official record has been kept of the exploits of the State Navy, but we find scattered reports here and there of daring feats and successful captures. The movements of the ships were not confined to Hampton Roads or to Chesapeake Bay, for we read that in September 1776 six ships were ordered to the West Indies to buy supplies; and more than once their battles were fought outside the Capes. In June 1776 the Barron brothers seized the *Oxford*, a British transport, off the Capes, taking prisoners two hundred and seventeen Highland soldiers; and in July Captain Richard Barron captured in the same place a Tory sloop from the West Indies and a large brig carrying provisions from England. Again, we read of a son of Commodore James Barron (Captain Sam Barron), who distinguished himself in an action with an enemy's vessel in Hampton Creek. When the enemy surrendered, it was found that more British were killed and wounded than there were Americans on the Virginia vessel. In 1779, however, a British fleet appeared in Hampton Roads and captured a large number of American vessels, the smaller ones retiring to the shallow bays and rivers. Later, in 1781, the roadstead was again in possession of a British fleet filled with Cornwallis's army, which had just evacuated Portsmouth. In May of this year one of the little Virginia vessels successfully eluded the whole of the British fleet, passing directly through it under cover of night. It was probably about this time that the last fight of the *Patriot* was witnessed by three loyal friends. Captain Mark Starlin and two of the Barrons were lying in the woods on the north shore of the James River watching for a boat to take them across when, to their great joy, they saw the plucky little *Patriot*, sailed by a Captain Watkins, chasing an English ship up the river. It was but a ruse of the British, however, who suddenly turned and gave battle, capturing the little vessel. Captain Starlin was an African slave, but

commanded his own boat and was given authority equal to that of other officers of the same rank. A number of other black seamen helped to man the Virginia Navy.

While the army of Cornwallis was occupying Hampton Roads, foraging parties were landed daily on James River and were often discovered and given battle by the local militia. Colonel Francis Mallory of Hampton took an active part in these skirmishes, and was at one time taken prisoner and held on board one of the ships of the British fleet. His brother, Captain Edward Mallory, tried in vain to secure his release until he succeeded in making prisoner a certain Captain Brown who had been out for provisions. This officer was exchanged for Colonel Mallory but was so severely wounded that he died before he could be removed to his ship. Although he had been warned not to take up arms against the British again, Colonel Mallory was soon at his old work and met a force of four hundred British soldiers with forty of his militia at the bridge connecting York and Elizabeth City Counties. The Americans made a stubborn resistance against overwhelming numbers, and the enemy, recognizing Mallory, who had refused a chance to escape, shot him down and ran him through with their bayonets. His buff vest, which was preserved by his family, was pierced by eleven bayonet holes.

When Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown, not a vestige of the Virginia Navy remained except the *Liberty*. Commodore Barron retired to his home in Hampton but, hearing that an English privateer had captured a Baltimore vessel bound to Hampton, true to his Viking spirit, he hastily collected twenty of his old associates, manned a schooner, and gave chase to the Englishman, recapturing the Baltimore vessel. "As long as there was a plank to stand on or a flag to follow" he fought for the cause of his country's liberty—a worthy representative of an illustrious family.

## YORKTOWN: THE WATERLOO OF THE REVOLUTION

**A**MONG the Indians living in Eastern Virginia under the dominion of King Powhatan were the Cheskiacks, who had a village on a bluff overlooking the York (then called the Pamunkey) and distant only ten or twelve miles from his capital—Werowocomoco. This was the first settlement near Yorktown. Later these Indians moved across the river into Gloucester County, and colonists settled in 1630 on or near the site of their village, keeping its Indian name but changing the name of the river to the Charles. To keep out the savages and give the settlers a chance to raise cattle, it was proposed to build a palisade stretching from “Cheskiack on the Charles to Martin’s Hundred (where Carter’s Grove now stands) on the Powhatan<sup>1</sup>,” and this was actually done in 1634 at a cost of twelve hundred pounds sterling. Although it took one hundred pounds a year to keep this palisade in repair, it probably more than paid for itself in the profit that accrued to the colonists from the stock they were able to raise within it. A court was held on Charles River in this same year, probably on the spot known as Temple Farm, from the ruins of a church with double walls found there, which are believed by the antiquarian, President Tyler of William and Mary College, to be those of the village church of York Parish. This plantation was afterwards the summer home of Governor Spotswood, and is now known as the Moore House.

At Cheskiack was built one of the five warehouses in the Colony to which planters were obliged to bring their crops to be inspected and from which they could be taken

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<sup>1</sup>The Indian name of the James River

only to be shipped to England. Later, in order to increase the importance of Jamestown, the capital, they were required to send their tobacco there to be shipped. Doubtless there was much evasion of these laws and the cave on the shore at Yorktown, now known as Cornwallis's Cave, was probably dug out of the bluff by some enterprising planter to assist in this evasion.

The "city" of Yorktown had its birth in the Act for Ports passed in 1691 which required the owners of certain plantations to sell town sites of fifty acres each for ten thousand pounds of tobacco. In York County it was the plantation of Benjamin Read from which fifty acres were sold and laid off in half-acre lots to establish Yorktown on what was henceforth known as the York River. The plan for the actual layout of the town still exists in the old records in the Court House, and bears the date 1705. Having acquired a school and church, custom-house and courthouse, stocks and pillory, the "city" led a placid existence for nearly a century, cultivating the same fields that the Indians had, though impoverishing the once fertile soil by continual planting of tobacco. The planters shipped their money crop (tobacco) to England and received in exchange the necessities of life; for recreation they fished and sailed on their broad river, enjoying all the gayeties of pre-Revolutionary life in the Virginia Colony.

That life in Yorktown was not too primitive may be judged from the appearance of the Nelson House, a fine specimen of Colonial architecture with its lofty rooms and solid walls. Through the massive door and down the circular stone steps fashionable Colonial dames tripped to party or ball or to a visit at a neighboring plantation, and numerous gallants no doubt attended them. The small windows and solid shutters indicate that, even in



the midst of the gayety, there was need of protection from attacks by Indians. George Mason, Washington, Jefferson, and Lafayette have slept in this house, and thither Cornwallis is said to have retired after being shelled out of Secretary Nelson's<sup>1</sup> house on the hill. The founder of the Nelson family in Yorktown was Thomas, known as "Scotch Tom." His son, William Nelson, president of the King's Council, built the mansion in 1740 for his eldest son, who became General Thomas Nelson, signer of the Declaration of Independence and war Governor of Virginia, the most patriotic and illustrious of his race. When money was needed to pay the troops during the Revolution and to run the Government, as Virginia's credit was low, he borrowed money on his personal credit to such an extent that after his death his vast estates went for the public debts, leaving his family penniless.

Quiet little Yorktown suddenly became, in 1781, the central figure of the Revolutionary stage. In order to capture Arnold, who had burned Richmond and raided the plantations of the James River, Washington decided to send both American and French forces into Virginia. Cornwallis, assuming command of the British forces, sent Arnold back to New York and tried to destroy Lafayette's army in the interior of Virginia, but not succeeding in this he returned to the sea and was ordered to entrench himself on the Peninsula, and this he decided to do at Yorktown. How securely he did this and how when he wished to leave his trenches he could not, being completely hemmed in and at the mercy of the combined forces under the personal command of Washington, all the world knows.

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<sup>1</sup>The site of Secretary Nelson's house has been acquired by the A. P. V. A. and its foundations will be excavated, marked, and protected.

One who would visualize the eleven-day siege and the final surrender of Cornwallis should stand on the battlefield hard by the National Cemetery about a mile from the town. In the distance he will see the line of breastworks completely encircling the village, with Fort Hamilton on the right overgrown with clambering blackberry vines, and in the spring the whole circle gay with the yellow flowers of the broom; and though he knows that these are fortifications of a later struggle and that the redoubt taken by dashing young Colonel Hamilton has long since disappeared, he does not refuse to give his imagination rein and repeople the trenches before Yorktown. He sees Washington's line forming a crescent before the breastworks—on the right American troops under General Benjamin Lincoln, on the left the French under General Rochambeau. He sees De Grasse's fleet in the river, the tall masts rising over the bluff, and realizes that no retreat for the British is possible that way. He traces out the lines of the first parallel and sees Washington putting the match to the first gun with his own hand. He hears the cannonade begin and continue almost without interruption for four days. What a target is that house on the hill! It is Secretary Nelson's, and Cornwallis is there. The venerable secretary is permitted to join his sons within the American lines and then shell after shell strikes the house until Cornwallis must needs find better protection elsewhere, possibly behind the solid shutters and stone walls of the old Nelson mansion. The master of that mansion is leading in person the State militia and, seeing his troops' hesitation to injure the old house, himself trains a gun on what he supposes to be the enemy's retreat. A cannon ball still lies embedded in the masonry of the rear wall.

The gazer into the past sees the second parallel estab-

lished and hears the resolve to storm the place. He joins gallant young Hamilton in his assault and is close behind when he mounts the works from the shoulder of one of his men and shouts, "Tell the Baron (Baron de Vioménil who was attacking the other redoubt) that my redoubt is carried, and ask where he is." "Tell the Marquis," answered the Frenchman, "that I am not in mine but will be in five minutes." He sees that the whole British line of works is threatened and that the contest is practically decided. He is thinking of the desperate efforts made by the British to escape—of the attempts to retake the works, to run the gauntlet of the fleet, to get across to Gloucester Point and join Tarleton—when he is suddenly brought back to the present by the voice of the old keeper: "Yes, sir, God Almighty won that battle, sir. Yes, sir, didn't He send a big storm and a black night and make the British turn back? Yes, sir, He did. The Lord be praised." And now he tells the visitor that he is standing just where the British army marched slowly and dejectedly out, the field music playing the old British air, "The World Turned Upside Down," carrying their arms with colors cased, between the American and French ranged in lines a mile long on either side of the road. With his aides, Washington, mounted on his famous white charger, was at the head of the American line and Count Rochambeau, similarly surrounded, at the head of the French line. Cornwallis, who had signed the articles of capitulation in Yorktown three hours before, was represented by General O'Hara, his only general officer, who conducted the surrender. A small monument marks the approximate site of the event.

By a broom-bordered and grass-grown road one reaches the Moore House, on a bluff near the shore about a mile from Yorktown, and looks with interest at the spot

where one of the most momentous events in the history of America took place—the discussion of the terms of the surrender. The antique roof and the rooms with corner fireplaces bespeak the age of the house, and its situation on the breezy bluff indicates the attraction it had for busy Governor Spotswood when he wished to rest from the cares of state in gay little Williamsburg. Driving back to Yorktown one stops to examine the tall and stately monument erected to the American soldiers who fell during the siege, and notes in the village the ancient customhouse (1706), once the fashionable rendezvous for young gentlemen about town. That it is the oldest one in America is very easy to believe as you examine its moss-covered, peaked roof, thick walls, and massive oaken doors and shutters. The Nelson House remains to tell of past prosperity, and the oldest house of all (1699) is just next door. The “Olde Yorktown Hotel,” probably built about 1709, still exists. On the hill stands old Grace Church with the graves beside it of the illustrious men who helped to make their country free—three generations of Nelsons—and beside them their friends and neighbors.



## OLD POINT COMFORT AND FORT MONROE

IT WAS before the settlement of Jamestown that Captain Newport and his band of adventurous colonists named the sandy strip of land at the eastern end of the Virginia peninsula Point Comfort, on account of the good channel and safe anchorage it afforded. When later a similar strip at the mouth of Mobjack Bay received the name of New Point Comfort, the prefix "Old" was naturally given to the first.

From the earliest times the strategic value of this point of land was recognized, and a fort was built upon it only two years after the landing at Jamestown. In 1609 Captain John Ratcliffe was sent down the river to fortify the point. "Algermoune Fort," when Don Diego Molina, a Spanish spy, saw it in 1611, consisted of stockades and posts without stone or brick and contained seven pieces of artillery, all of iron. It was manned by forty men. The name afterwards fell into disuse and the fort was referred to as Point Comfort Fort. It was rebuilt in 1632 and all newcomers to the Colony were ordered to pay sixty-four pounds of tobacco towards its maintenance. The garrison was paid in tobacco and corn, the captain receiving two thousand pounds of tobacco and ten barrels of corn. It was added to a third time in 1665 but was so inadequate as a defense that the Dutch twice in the seventeenth century invaded the harbor and burned the English shipping there. Finally in 1727 a new and larger fort was built of brick and named Fort George in honor of the reigning king. During the Revolution, just before the surrender at Yorktown, some additional fortifications were thrown up at Old Point Comfort by Count de Grasse, admiral of the French fleet.

A few years after the War of 1812 it became evident that stronger fortifications were needed at Old Point Comfort. Two acres on the Point had been ceded to the Government at the beginning of the century and on this land the lighthouse now stands. The State made an additional cession to the Government in 1821 of two hundred and fifty acres, or all the land east and south of Mill Creek. A fort to enclose eighty acres had already been begun. It was medieval in character, with thick, high, granite walls surrounded by a broad and deep moat twenty-six acres in area and supplied with several draw-bridges. Two hundred and fifty cannon were placed in deep embrasures, both in the main fort and in the water battery, and broad, grassy ramparts surmounted the casemates. The stone work was done by white masons but all other labor was performed by military convicts or by slaves hired at fifty cents a day from their masters. The fort, or more properly the fortress, since it was a fort within a fort, was named for President Monroe. The garrison numbered at first around five hundred men, one-third of all the artillery in the country.

At the same time that Fort Monroe was begun, it was determined to add to the harbor defenses by making an artificial island on a shoal midway between Old Point Comfort and Sewell's Point opposite. The water here was fifteen feet deep and the making of the island was an immense task, necessitating the sinking of hundreds of thousands of tons of stone and the expenditure of millions of dollars. It was done, however, and then a small army of men was set to work to construct a fort of masonry similar to the one on the mainland, without the moat, but provided with large, dark storerooms or dungeons built of solid masonry included within the walls. A rough railway was built around the island and huge derricks set up.

The new defense was first named Fort Calhoun for the Secretary of War, but was renamed Fort Wool during the Civil War, and is known locally as "The Rip Raps" from the shoal water in which it was built. As the foundations continued to settle it was impossible to advance the work rapidly and it was still incomplete at the beginning of the Civil War. For a time afterward the construction proceeded, but it soon became evident that with the rapid improvement in guns, powder, and projectiles then in progress, parapets of masonry would no longer afford proper protection against naval attack. The old casemate batteries of Fort Wool have therefore been dismantled and new batteries of rapid-firing guns have taken their place.

Fort Monroe is the largest regular work of the kind in the United States, and at the time of its completion in 1834 was considered proof against any possible attack by sea. Its masonry walls, moat, casemates, and interior constructions still remain intact, except the water battery, but the old smooth-bore guns with their old-fashioned mounts have been removed, and the fort proper forms no part of the modern system of harbor defenses. It is at present used to provide barracks and quarters for the regular artillery garrison, of about one thousand men with their officers. The Coast Artillery School for commissioned officers is located at Fort Monroe, and all the junior officers, including graduates from the Military Academy at West Point, are required to take special post-graduate courses of study at this school in order to fit them for the proper performance of their professional duties. The walls of the old fort enclose a fine level parade ground, the scene of the daily guard mount and weekly dress parade. It is ornamented by clumps of picturesque live-oaks, which do not grow further north

than Old Point. The fort has received many distinguished guests and prisoners, and owns some interesting war trophies, such as the gun from the *Almirante Oquendo* captured during the battle of Santiago, seven small cannon from the siege of Yorktown, and two large German guns captured during the World War. It was at Fort Monroe that Black Hawk was a prisoner for a short time following the Black Hawk War in 1832, and Jefferson Davis was confined here in a casemate near the postern gate after the dissolution of the Confederacy.

During the World War the Coast Artillery School at Fort Monroe was tremendously expanded for the training of officers and of candidates for commissions. There were, also, schools for training enlisted men in specialist occupations. The military activities of the Peninsula were all consolidated under one command known as the Coast Artillery Training Centre.

The artillery defenses of Hampton Roads and the entrance to Chesapeake Bay constitute a most important part of our system of National defense. In the event of war they must protect the Norfolk and Portsmouth Navy Yard, the Naval Base, the Newport News Shipyard, and the Naval Mine Depot at Yorktown. Also the shipping and vast commercial interests of the Roads and the Chesapeake must be defended, and, most important of all, the water approaches to Baltimore and Washington. The heavy gun and mortar batteries which extend along the shore front just outside and to the north of Fort Monroe, are of the most formidable type. The big guns, mounted upon disappearing carriages, are placed behind thick parapets of solid concrete and sand which completely guard them from exposure to the enemy except at the instant of firing. Powerful searchlights are so placed along the main ship channel as to illumine the water



areas within range of the guns for night firing. The fire from coast-defense guns must be directed as effectively by night as by day, and in no other harbor are the preparations for defense against night attack so complete in every detail of equipment and drill. There is an anti-aircraft regiment for protection from attack by airplanes, either by day or night. Additional defense can be obtained from the railway and heavy-tractor artillery units at Fort Eustis, twenty-seven miles up the Peninsula, from the air centre at Langley Field, near Hampton, and from the Coast Artillery contingent at Fort Story on Cape Henry.

Of considerable historic interest at Old Point Comfort was the old Hygeia Hotel, razed in 1902 to make possible a military park. It had its beginning in a small house built in 1821 near the entrance to the Fort and consisting of one large room, which served for both parlor and dining room, with four chambers on either side of it. The kitchen was in an outbuilding. This hostelry was later considerably enlarged but was finally removed in 1863 because it interfered with the training of guns in the fort. It was carted away entire across Mill Creek on a tram car drawn by fifty Government teams. The Hygeia was rebuilt on its later site close to the beach, but was only a small, rambling building. In 1874 Mr. Harrison Phoebus purchased it, fitted it with modern improvements, and added to it until it was large enough to accommodate hundreds of guests. Every President of the United States, up to 1896, except Mr. Cleveland was entertained there, and among its guests were numbered prominent foreign diplomats, admirals, army officers, statesmen, and financiers, among whom may be mentioned Jay Gould, King Kalakaua, and Li Hung Chang. The Chamberlin, with its sun galleries and winter gar-

dens and its miles of promenades succeeded the Hygeia in 1896 but was burned in 1920. In the spring of 1928 this famous hostelry was superseded by the Chamberlin-Vanderbilt, "the last word" in hotel construction. (See page 89).

## XII

### ROUND ABOUT HAMPTON ROADS

OLD Point Comfort lies at the entrance to Hampton Roads, that "broad bay" which gave shelter to the storm-tossed colonists in 1607. It is one of the largest and most beautiful landlocked harbors in the world.

Following the north shore we pass the site of Lord De la Warre's earliest forts, Henry and Charles, built for the protection of the colonists at Old Kecoughtan after the Indians had been driven away. After the present town of Hampton had been settled on the west side of the "Southampton River," close by, the site of the old Indian village was gradually divided into plantations which persisted through Colonial times. In 1854 the Chesapeake Female Seminary was established there, an excellent school with, however, but a brief existence. During the Civil War it was used as an officers' hospital and was afterwards purchased by General Butler who sold it to the Government. It then became the main building of the National Soldiers' Home, and its starry dome was a landmark in all the region. The present buildings, housing about two thousand soldiers of the World War and the Spanish American War, number nearly seventy, the grounds form a beautiful park, and the view from the water front over Hampton Roads is superb.

Beyond, just inside the mouth of Hampton Creek (Southampton River) rise the attractive and substantial buildings of Hampton Institute, its Romanesque church tower conspicuous among them. This school for Negroes was founded in 1868 by General Samuel Chapman Armstrong, and is now known throughout the world as the pioneer of industrial schools. It numbers in all its de-



Photo by Cheyne

The Communion Silver of 1619 and the old Vestry book of Elizabeth City Parish. This is the oldest and most precious Communion Silver belonging to the Episcopal Church in America



Photo by Cheyne

St. John's Church, Hampton, whose walls survived two great fires





St. John's, Hampton, at the close of the Civil War



Photo courtesy Virginia State Chamber of Commerce

Where Braddock landed, Hampton. General Braddock made Hampton his headquarters in 1755 while outfitting for his campaign against the French

partments over 2500 students. Across the Creek lies the old town of Hampton, to which Chapter XIII is devoted. Following the shore line towards the west we reach the mouth of the James River where stands Newport News with its huge grain elevators. This city, which now contains one of the largest dry-docks in the world and is an important commercial centre, was settled in 1621 by "Master Gookin out of Ireland who arrived with fifty men of his own and thirty passengers exceedingly well furnished with all sorts of provisions and cattle." He named it New Port Newce<sup>1</sup> in honor of his friend, Sir William Newce of Ireland. A quaint old chronicler tells us that "at Nuportsnews the cotton trees in a yeere grow so thicke as one's arme and so high as a man; here anything that is planted doth prosper so well as in no place better."

Off Newport News took place the famous battle of the *Monitor* and *Merrimac* which revolutionized naval warfare. Every schoolboy can describe the scene—can tell what happened the day before "On board of the *Cumberland*, sloop-of-war"; how the balls from the wooden ships and the shore batteries rebounded from the *Merrimac's* iron sides as if they were made of India rubber; how there was consternation in the Union fleet and alarm at the White House; how the *Monitor* ("the Yankee cheese box") reached Hampton Roads late on that terrible day; and how for four hours on the Sunday morning following the hand-to-hand fight continued. "David," the people said, "had come out against Goliath." Captain John Wise who, standing on Sewell's Point opposite, was an eye-witness of the fight, says in the "The End of an Era" that the *Monitor* "presented the appearance of a

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<sup>1</sup>Other authorities say that the proper name of the town is Newport's News, so named from good news brought to the Jamestown Colony by Captain Newport.

saucy kingbird pecking at a very large and very black crow.”

Neither boat could ram the other and shells rebounded from the armor of both. Finally a shell from the *Merrimac*,<sup>1</sup> passing between the iron logs of the pilot-house of the *Monitor*, blinded gallant Lieutenant Worden. The *Monitor* continued in action in spite of this disaster and, as she was able on account of her light draught to keep in shallow water where the *Merrimac* could not follow, the latter soon retired to Norfolk. Both sides claimed the victory.

Standing at Sewell's Point one can look out over Hampton Roads and see that it is formed by three rivers—the James coming in from the west, the Nansemond from the south, and the Elizabeth from the east. Looking south one sees Craney Island at the mouth of the Elizabeth River. This was fortified during the War of 1812 to guard the city of Norfolk, and the garrison was able to repulse an attack of the British under Admiral Cockburn in June 1813. Portions of an unfinished canal through which the British hoped to reach Norfolk without passing the harbor defenses may still be seen near Cape Henry. Craney Island, together with Sewell's and Lambert's Points, was fortified by the Confederates during the Civil War, and the first action of that war on Virginia's soil was an attack on Sewell's Point, with no decisive result, by two vessels from Old Point.

South of Craney Island is Portsmouth, where there has been a navy yard since Colonial days, the first one being built by the English but utilized by the Virginians for the building of the Virginia Navy after the departure of Lord Dunmore during the Revolution. In 1801 it

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<sup>1</sup>Known also as the *Virginia* and as the “Confederate ram”

was purchased and transferred to the United States, being known as the Gosport Navy Yard. In April 1861 it was evacuated and burned and the ships sunk by the Union army. The *Merrimac*, which afterwards took so conspicuous a part in the war, was one of the ships sunk. She was raised, plated with iron (it is said according to models made by Commodore James Barron of Revolutionary fame), and renamed the *Virginia*, as she was always afterwards known by the Confederates. When they, in turn, on the advance of the Union army in May 1862, after the battle of the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac*, evacuated the navy yard and the forts on Hampton Roads the *Virginia* was burned near Craney Island. The present navy yard, located partly in Portsmouth and partly in Norfolk, is the largest in the United States, and this is true also of the Naval Hospital near Portsmouth on which site once stood Fort Nelson of Revolutionary times, later replaced by Fort Norfolk on the opposite shore.

It was at Sewell's Point that the Jamestown Tercentennial was held in 1907. The buildings of that Exposition were about twenty-five in number and were Colonial in architecture. While the chief interest of the celebration lay in its historical features, the naval display was doubtless the most striking. Ships of all nations were represented, and it was a beautiful and impressive sight to see them arranged in long curving lines across the bay and decorated with bunting from deck to topmast. Most interesting of all the exhibits were the three little Spanish caravels, replicas of those used by Columbus when he discovered America.

Hampton Roads has been the scene of many brilliant naval pageants as well as of numerous naval battles. During the World War it was constantly filled with the



merchant ships of all nations, those of the warring countries being most interestingly camouflaged. The port has always been the rendezvous of the American Navy, owing to its vast anchorage, its numerous facilities for the handling of coal and other supplies, and its ready accessibility to other waters used for manœuvres. The Naval Base on the site of the Exposition grounds is one of the largest of its kind in America, and the sea planes operating from that point add greatly to the interest of the thousands of visitors sailing over the bay on the numerous passenger boats.

The cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth are on opposite sides of Elizabeth River on the south side of Hampton Roads. The first white men who visited the site of Norfolk belonged to the expedition of Sir Walter Raleigh to Roanoke Island; while on a voyage of exploration as far as Chesapeake Bay some of its members found Indians on the Elizabeth River. But it was not until nearly one hundred years later, in 1691, that the city was founded, the original site of fifty acres being purchased for ten thousand pounds of tobacco. Almost another century passed before Portsmouth was settled in 1752. St. Paul's Church, which was built in Norfolk a few years before the settlement of Portsmouth, is one of the oldest buildings in the present city. Signs of very early Colonial occupation are to be found near Norfolk in Princess Anne County, where at Oceana still stands the little "Chapel by the Sea," built in 1680, and near Kempsville the ruins of "Old Hundred" chapel built in 1690. The silver service given to this church by Queen Anne is now in the Kempsville church, only ten years its junior. The name of a neighboring plantation, "Witchduck," recalls the fact that there in the days of the Salem persecution a woman was ducked as a witch. The old Thoroughgood

House near Lynnhaven Bay is worth a visit. It was built about 1635 and has two great T chimneys, the one in the living room having its "breast" paneled to the ceiling. The house has secret closets in which its occupants could hide from the Indians.

By 1770 Norfolk had grown to be the most populous and flourishing town in Virginia, Richmond being at that time a place of no significance. It was at the height of its Colonial prosperity, on New Year's Day 1776, that Norfolk was bombarded by Lord Dunmore, who had fled from Williamsburg after his disastrous robbing of the Powder Horn. Nearly fourteen hundred houses were destroyed at a loss of a million and half dollars. One of the shells fired during the bombardment is still imbedded in a wall of St. Paul's Church.

After the Revolution Norfolk was rebuilt and increased rapidly in population. Within the last forty years an old landmark has been destroyed—the "wishing oak" under which Powhatan's warriors smoked the peace pipe with neighboring tribes. It stood on the estate of Governor Tasewell, the site of the Hotel Lorraine. Two dates in the history of Norfolk stand out in the memory of her citizens—1855 when twenty-two hundred deaths occurred from yellow fever; and 1857 the year of the great freeze when, in January, passengers from New York went from Old Point to Norfolk on the ice. Richmond is now the largest and richest city in Virginia, but Norfolk is the second city in the State, being one of the most important shipping ports on the Atlantic seaboard.

## XIII

### HAMPTON: AMERICA'S OLDEST ENGLISH TOWN

**T**HE oldest town in this historic region—and in fact the oldest continuous English town in America—is Hampton on the north shore of Hampton Roads, occupying both sides of Hampton Creek. The Roads, the Creek, and the town were all at first Southampton, named for the Earl of Southampton in England.

Hampton had its beginnings, as we have seen, in the small settlement in 1610 on the site of the Indian village of Kecoughtan (where the Soldiers' Home now stands). However, owing to the establishment on the west side of the river of the tobacco warehouses, ordered (1691) set up in each county by the General Assembly, the settlement grew in that situation instead of on the east side, and in 1705 Hampton was legally incorporated as a town. It was a port of entry as well as a shipping port for tobacco, and there was consequently much business in the way of customs and tonnage duties. In fact it was the place of greatest trade in Virginia and was also the county seat, with courthouse and prison (built in 1716), pillory, whipping post, and ducking stool. It was then a place of one hundred houses, and the people lived in great comfort.

The first church (1624) appears to have stood on the east side of Hampton Creek on the glebe land near the bridge (reached through College Place). The foundations have been unearthed and the spot rededicated. A handsome iron fence surrounds it, the gift of the Kecoughtan Branch of the A. P. V. A., and a granite cross commemorating the site has been placed by the Hampton Chapter of the D. A. R. The first minister was the Rev. William Mease who is said to have come to Virginia with

Sir Thomas Gates in 1610. Near the "Indian House Thicket" here was leased a piece of land by one of the early ministers of this parish who, says Lyon G. Tyler in his "Cradle of the Republic," was the first exponent of the idea that "the only good Indian is a dead Indian." He had published a letter expressing his belief that it would be useless to attempt to civilize the Indians until their head men were put to death. It is a curious coincidence that Hampton Institute, which has helped to prove the falsity of the minister's position by training hundreds of Indians for useful citizenship, should stand, as it does, so near the spot formerly leased by this "man of little faith." About 1667 a new church was built at Pembroke Farm, one mile west of Hampton, where four ancient tombstones still mark its site. It was because this church was out of repair that from 1694 to 1728, when the foundations of old St. John's were dug, services were held in the courthouse, first in the old one and then in the new one built in 1716.

St. John's Church, then, one of the oldest now in use in the United States, dates from 1728, when it was built of bricks burned with wood taken "from the School land"—the "School" being the one established by Benjamin Syms, the first free school in America. The bricks were of English bond, and the same kind are found in the Jamestown tower, in St. Luke's (1632) at Smithfield, in St. Paul's (1739), Norfolk, and in other early Colonial churches. One of the rectors of St. John's writes to the Bishop of London sometime between 1719 and 1731 that his parish is fifty miles in circumference and contains three hundred and fifty families, that there are about one hundred communicants, and that the slave owners are careful to instruct the young Negro children and bring them to baptism. In 1760 one of the parishioners be-



queathed forty pounds sterling towards purchasing a bell "out of England," provided the vestry and church wardens would undertake to build the belfry within twelve months. The old vestry book (dating back to 1751) tells of the contracts awarded for building and painting the belfry, and no doubt the bell was purchased, for later records speak of the "old Queen Anne bell which hung in the tower on the west end of the church."

In 1755 General Braddock made Hampton his headquarters while outfitting for his campaign against the French, and camps and hospitals were set up for the soldiers until they re-embarked for Alexandria whence they marched westward to their disastrous defeat. The spot where Braddock landed in what is now the West End of Hampton, has been marked with an attractive monument by the Colonial Dames of America in the State of Virginia.

Owing to the numerous arms of the sea that indent the coast of eastern Virginia, Hampton and the outlying plantations were peculiarly exposed to attacks by sea, and during the Revolutionary period so great was the danger from this source that the gallant little State Navy was organized, as we have seen, for coast defense. Skirmishes between the militia and detachments from Dunmore's and Cornwallis's fleets in the Roads continued during the whole period of the war, but after the repulse of Captain Squires' force in 1775 there was no attack on Hampton during the Revolution. Tradition says that in 1776, shortly after the Declaration of Independence, the steeple of St. John's Church was struck by lightning and the royal coat of arms which had adorned it was thrown to the ground. However that may be, the people certainly threw off the English yoke and made a stand for democratic equality. The change was apparent not only in



Photo by Cook

The Old Capitol, Richmond



Photo by Cook

Historic St. John's, Richmond



Photo by Cook

Shirley on the James. The first "Shirley" was a place of refuge in 1622



Lower Brandon on the James



government affairs but in social and domestic matters. Simplicity of dress became the rule, ceremony and pomp in public functions were discarded, class distinctions became weaker, and the great plantations dwindled in size. Fortunately the old English love of outdoor life and sports, and the cordiality and hospitality of his ancestors remained to the Virginian; and hunting, fishing, fox hunting, and the entertainment of guests are still among the pleasures of the residents of Tidewater Virginia.

The War of 1812 was more destructive than the Revolution in its effect on the town of Hampton. Admiral Cockburn, who commanded a British fleet lying in the Roads, attacked Hampton on June 25, 1813. Landing a force of 2500 men at what is now "Indian River" (in the Boulevard section), he himself sailed with a small fleet towards Hampton Creek, appearing off Blackbeard's Point from whence he shelled the town. The water front was protected by seven small guns and four hundred and fifty militia who were encamped at "Little England" farm (now known as West End) under command of Colonel Crutchfield. The little garrison repulsed the enemy for a time, but the latter, joining the land party, obliged Colonel Crutchfield's force to retreat up the Peninsula, in which direction many of the inhabitants had already fled. The outrages permitted by the British during their two days' stay have made this occupation of Hampton notorious in history. The town was given up to pillage and the inhabitants assaulted and robbed. This vandalism is attributed to the French prisoners, who formed part of the British force and were fresh from similar scenes of plunder and outrage in Spain.

Mr. Richard B. Servant, who was for many years secretary of the vestry of St. John's Church, says that when he came into town, a boy of twelve, after the British



had evacuated it in 1813, he found that they had used the old graveyard as a slaughter house for cattle and that the church walls bore marks of fires that the soldiers had kindled to cook their meals. The interior of the church had been used as a common barrack. Just before the war the old Queen Anne bell of the parish had been removed to the militia camp at "Little England." The tongue had become loose and an axe that had been used to strike the hour had cracked the famous old bell. From this time until 1824 the church was allowed to go to decay and became a common shelter for horses, cattle, and hogs. Religion must have been at a low ebb indeed to have allowed such desecration of a sacred edifice in time of peace. It is said that when efforts were finally made to restore the church it was difficult to find more than a half-dozen prayerbooks in the parish.

The first suggestion to restore the church property to its former condition was made in 1822 or 1823 by Mrs. Janie Hope, the eldest daughter of Commodore James Barron. Her suggestion was acted upon by Mr. Servant who succeeded in raising funds to rebuild the walls of the graveyard and to place a wrought-iron gate at the entrance. A meeting of the friends of the church followed and a vestry was elected, the members of which made a determined effort to raise funds for the repair of the church. At this time nothing was standing but bare walls and a leaky roof; nothing else remained but the English tiles on the floor, all the church furniture having been destroyed. Fortunately the vestry book had been carefully preserved by a resident and is still intact, a moth-eaten, crumbling volume containing the parish records since 1751. The church enclosure was cleaned and occasional services held while the repairs were going on, some of the worshipers sitting on the bare tiles of the floor. Early in

1830 these repairs were completed and the church was consecrated by Bishop Moore. The old bell was recast and remained for many years the best bell in the country.

For thirty-one years the parish records of St. John's continued unbroken; then again, in 1861, all but the walls of the church and the vestry book were sacrificed. On a midsummer night, in order to prevent its occupation by Federal troops, Hampton was fired by the property owners of the town—officers and soldiers in the Confederate army—"to demonstrate the intense earnestness of the people in the cause they had espoused and for which they considered no sacrifice too great." But five houses and the church walls remained standing on the site of the attractive little village of Hampton. Only one of these houses is now in existence. There were but few people in the town and these were notified of the plans of General Magruder, the commanding officer, who had reluctantly yielded to the wishes of the inhabitants to destroy their two hundred thousand dollars' worth of property.

After the war the old families flocked back to the ruins of their homes in Hampton, ever afterwards known as "the Game-cock Town," and house building commenced. St. John's was restored in less than five years and is now a large and flourishing parish with a modern parish house. Among St. John's richest treasures are the ancient vestry book and the oldest and most precious communion silver belonging to the Episcopal Church in America—a cup, chalice, and paten brought to Virginia in 1619. They were the gift of one Mistress Robinson in England to the church at Smith's (afterward Southampton) Hundred, which was destroyed during the Indian massacre of 1622. The silver was preserved by Governor Yeardley, and after his death was kept at Jamestown, being finally transferred to Hampton, probably because the

place was named for the same Earl of Southampton who gave his name to Smith's Hundred. It has survived three wars and three great fires.

Hampton not only has one of the oldest churches in the United States but is also the home of the first free school in America, established in 1634. This was founded by the will of one Benjamin Syms and was located on the Poquoson River in Elizabeth City County. In 1659 a second free school was established by Thomas Eaton at the head of Back River in the same county. These two schools were later consolidated under the name of the Syms-Eaton Academy and became a part of the Hampton public-school system in 1851, twenty years before such a system was adopted throughout the South. During the burning of Hampton in 1862 the securities in which the Syms-Eaton fund had been invested passed safely through fire and flight and siege, owing to the faithful guardianship of Colonel J. C. Phillips of Hampton, and the interest of this fund of \$10,000 is still used to help defray the expenses of the public schools of Elizabeth City County.

## XIV

### RICHMOND AND THE JAMES RIVER PLANTATIONS

ON JUNE 29, 1776, the Virginia Colony ceased to be and the Commonwealth began. The Convention of 1775, on account of Lord Dunmore's attitude, had been obliged to leave the Colonial capital—Williamsburg—and met in St. John's Church in "the little village of Richmond." Here Patrick Henry, soon to be made Governor of the Commonwealth, made his world-famous speech, ending with the oft-quoted words: "Give me liberty or give me death." The public records soon followed the Convention, for safekeeping, and with them the offices of the government; thus Richmond became Virginia's third capital, by the necessities of war, the removal being made legal in 1779 by an Act of the Assembly.

At this time there were less than three hundred houses in Richmond, for it had not been in existence much more than thirty years, and towns in those days did not grow, like mushrooms, in a single night. It was founded by Colonel William Byrd of Westover on the James, who wrote in 1733 in his "Journey to the Land of Eden": "When we got home we laid the foundations of two large cities—one at Shacco's to be called Richmond and the other at the Point of Appamattucks River to be named Petersburg." The invitation to all people to come to Richmond to live was published in the first Colonial newspaper, the *Virginia Gazette*, established in 1736. It was settled almost wholly by Scotch or Irish merchants, and nothing of importance, save skirmishes with the Indians, happened there until the traitor Arnold moved against it when he invaded Virginia in 1781. Anchoring near Jamestown he went the next day as far as Westover be-



low Richmond, which then had a population of only eighteen hundred persons, half of whom were slaves. Arnold landed his troops and marched into the town, meeting with no resistance, for Jefferson, then Governor, unable to assemble an adequate force of militia, had taken the public records and gone with them to a place of safety. The cannon factory on the hill was destroyed, many buildings were burned, and all the tobacco in the place went up in smoke. All this Arnold did in twenty-four hours and then retired to Westover, giving Jefferson a chance to come back.

After the close of the Revolutionary War Richmond began to grow into a city. The capitol, finished in 1789, was built after a model brought by Jefferson from France, which may still be seen in the State Library. It is a stucco copy of the *Maison Carrée* in Nismes, France, a Roman temple built by Augustus Cæsar as a memorial to his two sons who had been killed in battle. Probably no building in the United States has been the scene of more famous debates than the Richmond capitol, and certainly no legislative halls have heard the voices of more distinguished statesmen. The roll call is a long one—Tyler, Mason, Madison, Monroe, Jefferson, Wythe, Chief Justice Marshall, John Randolph of Roanoke. In 1861 the accidents of war again made Richmond a capital, this time of the Confederate States, and the Confederate Congress during the four years of its existence met in the capitol building. In 1902 two wings were added, making it much more beautiful and imposing. In the rotunda stands Houdon's famous statue of Washington, said to be one of the most priceless pieces of marble in the world. The equestrian statue of Washington in Capitol Square is also a wonderful piece of work. It was drawn by hand by enthusiastic citizens from the ship

landing to its present position. Around the pedestal of the monument stand figures of some of the "founders of the nation"—Virginians all—George Mason, Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Lewis, Patrick Henry, Thomas Nelson, and John Marshall.

In Capitol Square, which embraces twelve acres in the centre of the city, are also the Governor's Mansion, the Old Bell Tower used in Colonial days to summon the residents, the State Museum, and the State Library containing famous documents, including the parole given Lord Cornwallis. Richmond is a city of monuments. Prominent among those on handsome Monument Avenue are the ones to Stonewall Jackson, Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee, and J. E. B. Stuart.

Richmond churches are closely associated with its history—St. John's, the oldest, with Patrick Henry and the Convention of 1788, made up of such men as Madison, Monroe, Marshall, Mason, Wythe, Pendleton, Harrison, and Edmund Randolph. The Monumental Church is built upon the site of the theatre which was burned in 1802 with great loss of life, and contains in an urn the ashes of the victims, among whom was the Governor of the State. Bishop Moore and Bishop Meade both preached in this church. St. Paul's has the distinction of having given its bell to be cast into cannon for use in the Civil War. President Davis and General Lee worshipped there, and there Mr. Davis received the telegram announcing that the lines had been broken at Petersburg and that Richmond would have to be evacuated. The home of the President, known as the "White House of the Confederacy," is now the Confederate Museum. General Lee's family lived during the war in what is at present the home of the Virginia Historical Society. In Battle Abbey on the Boulevard are preserved many war

relics and paintings of great beauty and value. Other interesting shrines are the old stone house built in 1737 which was Lafayette's headquarters and is now converted into the Edgar Allan Poe Shrine with beautiful gardens; and the John Marshall House dating from 1795 which the City Council has given to the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities. This patriotic society has placed tablets on most of the historic spots in the city.

The capital of the Confederacy was of course the strategic point of the struggle of 1861-5. No less than fifteen pitched battles and twenty-five skirmishes were fought in its vicinity during those years, and the Confederate army was besieged in the city for nearly a year before it was evacuated. Libby Prison, whose name and history are so well known, is no longer in Richmond, having been removed to Chicago at the time of the World's Fair. The above sentences suggest many pages of both written and unwritten history. In beautiful Hollywood Cemetery overlooking the James rest 18,000 Southern soldiers and the President who represented their cause. Here, too, lie the bodies of the United States Presidents Monroe and Tyler, of Henry A. Wise, General Fitzhugh Lee, General Pickett, Bishop Meade, and John Randolph of Roanoke.

In the last sixty years Richmond has increased rapidly in population and prosperity and is now the largest and wealthiest city in the State. As in Colonial years it is closely associated with the plantations on the James, for their owners in many cases have houses in the capital also. The Byrds of Westover, the Harrisons of Berkeley and Brandon, and the Carters of Shirley are names as well known in Richmond as in their stately mansions overlooking the broad "Powhatan." The founder of Vir-



Photo courtesy Virginia State Chamber of Commerce

Carter's Grove before its restoration in 1929



Photo courtesy Virginia State Chamber of Commerce

Upper Brandon on the James, the historic home of the Harrisons





Photo courtesy Virginia State Chamber of Commerce

Claremont Manor on the James



Photo courtesy Virginia State Chamber of Commerce

Westover on the James. Home of the founder of Richmond, Colonel William Byrd

ginia's capital, Colonel William Evelyn Byrd, sleeps in the garden at Westover under a monument on which the curious may read his biography. He was the most illustrious of his line—"one of the brightest stars in the social skies of Colonial Virginia." He was a statesman, a scholar, and a Fellow of the Royal Society, and was said to be the most accomplished man in America. The library at Westover was "the finest on the continent." He was the author of the *Westover MSS.*, a fascinating account of plantation life in his generation. His "Memoirs" are also of great interest. His daughter, "The Fair Evelyn," was the greatest beauty of her time and has been appropriated by Mary Johnston as one of the characters in "Audrey." Westover house is one of the best specimens of Colonial architecture in America. All the lofty rooms are wainscoted to the ceiling; the twisted balustrades of the stairs at the back of the great hall are of solid mahogany. The vandalism of the soldiers during the Civil War destroyed much of quaint interest and priceless value, but the restoration has been thorough and the house is probably the best preserved of Virginia Colonial houses.

Berkeley, the adjoining plantation, was the birthplace of President Harrison. It also is in a good state of preservation. In common with most of the other James River plantations, it suffered severely in the Indian massacre of 1622. Shirley, the seat of the Carters for more than two centuries, was laid out in 1611 by Sir Thomas Dale, Governor of the Colony, who took an active part in forwarding the marriage of Rolfe and Pocahontas. Anne Hill Carter, who was born here, was the mother of Robert E. Lee. The house, built in 1642, shares with Westover and the Brandons the honor of being among the finest specimens of Southern Colonial architecture

still existing. Shirley was so "well fortified" during the Indian massacre of 1622 that it was a place of refuge and no one was killed there. Soon after their marriage Rolfe and Pocahontas moved to Varina, which was probably the birthplace of their son, Thomas Rolfe, from whom many Virginians are proud to own their descent. Varina was also once the home of "Commissary Blair" of William and Mary College, and of William Stith, also a president of William and Mary, and author of a history of Virginia.

All the James River families and indeed all old Virginia families are related to one another, as the names plainly show—Carter Page, Carter Harrison, Byrd Harrison, etc. At Brandon, just above Jamestown on the south shore lived another branch of the Harrison family. The wings of the Lower Brandon house were built by Nathaniel Harrison about 1712. His son, Benjamin Harrison, was a roommate of Thomas Jefferson at William and Mary, and the latter planned the square central part of the house. This plantation was pillaged by Arnold during the Revolution and raided by General Butler's troops in the Civil War, when the outbuildings were burned and the stock stolen; the mansion was seriously injured and would have been destroyed but for a telegram from President Lincoln forbidding it. Fortunately the ladies of the household had left for Richmond two days before, carrying with them everything of value that was movable. The house was owned by Harrisons for nearly two centuries. One of the former owners married Judith, daughter of William Shakespeare. Lower Brandon is altogether charming in spring with violets dotting the lawns, its lovely old-fashioned garden full of daffodils and cowslips and the shrubbery a tangle of forsythia, spirea, dogwood, and red-bud. The wonderful growth of

box shows its age, and fringe trees, magnolias, mimosas, roses, and ivy vie with each other in luxuriance as the season advances. The dents of bullets over the door and other signs of the ravages of war only add to the charm of the place. Upper Brandon was originally included in the Brandon estate. The house was built early in the nineteenth century by a son of the Harrison family. The estate is noted for its beautiful shade trees and dwarf boxwood.

Lower down the river on the south side lies what remains of a former estate of 12,500 acres owned in Colonial days by Colonel Arthur Allen. The interesting Claremont home occupies part of this plantation and has outbuildings still arranged in Colonial fashion. One of them is probably the smallest four-story house in the world. The mansion house has unusual features in its second story—a box for valuables hidden under the bricks of the hearth; a hiding place for a sword in a window frame; and in one room two “powder closets” through holes in the doors of which Colonial beaux and belles thrust their heads to be powdered by a servant. Another Colonial house still stands on this estate. It is known as Bacon’s Castle, from the fact that it was fortified by Bacon’s adherents during his Rebellion. It was built in 1655 of irregular English bond, and is remarkable for its curved and stepped gables and its clustered chimneys. The garret and basement show great antiquity.

Across the river below Williamsburg is a well-known Colonial house, until recently open to the public, called Carter’s Grove, built by Carter Burwell in 1751, on Martin’s Hundred, an estate of 80,000 acres. The walls of this house are over three feet thick and tradition says that the nicks on the banisters were made by General Tarle-



ton's sword when he rode on horseback up and down the stairs. It was the scene in Jefferson's time of his unsuccessful wooing of Rebecca Burwell.

Most of these fine old plantation houses<sup>1</sup> are not visible from the James. They are only a few of the hundred or more that stood in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries on either side of the river and represented a life of leisurely content and openhanded hospitality combined with charming courtesy to friends and kindness to dependents which was not often duplicated elsewhere.

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<sup>1</sup>Anyone interested in the old homes and churches of Virginia will find great pleasure and satisfaction in reading "Historic Virginia Homes and Churches" by Robert A. Lancaster, Jr.

## XV

### THE PENINSULA'S APPEAL TO THE TOURIST

THE concluding sentence of the last chapter indicates the charm which Virginia's Historic Peninsula has for the tourist. Dwellers in the bustling twentieth century like to see, if only in imagination, the very different life and surroundings of Colonial times, and when so many spots connected with the very earliest years of our nation's life are clustered in a circle with a radius of only about fifty miles, with good roads in every direction, the attraction becomes irresistible.

Jamestown lies at the center of this circle. Old Point Comfort, Richmond, Norfolk, and Yorktown being points on its circumference. But since present-day Jamestown has neither hotels nor garages, trips by motor must necessarily start elsewhere. Premising that the tourist has motored from his home, North, West, or South, over the excellent roads that lead to Richmond and Old Point, or has reached the latter popular resort by one of the numerous boats or trains that serve the Virginia Peninsula, we will make that place our starting point. 95-988

Fortunately the new hotel there—the Chamberlin-Vanderbilt, opened in Easter week 1928—offers excellent accommodations to the tourist. Built of brick with limestone trimmings, it is Colonial in style and, being nine stories in height, has magnificent views over Hampton Roads and Chesapeake Bay. The walls and floors are of reenforced concrete and the partitions of hollow-tile construction, so that it is believed to be absolutely fire-proof. With banquet and ballrooms, roof garden, and swimming pool there is little left to wish for in this modern hostelry.

One may at once revel in the Colonial atmosphere of the Peninsula by a trip to Williamsburg (37 miles from Old Point; 51 from Richmond). The motor road passes through Hampton, Newport News, and the "war" village of Hilton, and winds its smooth way through woods and fields a few miles from the James. Newport News was the site during the World War of numerous camps—for embarkation, debarkation, stevedores, infantry, motor transport, air service—all of which have disappeared. The big shipyard at Newport News and the new Warwick Hotel are worth a visit. The Virginia Conservation Commission has become a public benefactor by placing markers on the many historic spots along this highway, making one realize, not only the very early settlement of the country, but the fact that this peninsula between the York and the James has been fought over in many wars. Those who like to adventure on country roads—very good here for the most part—would enjoy following those on the right and left of the highway, one set leading to fishing villages on inlets of Chesapeake Bay and the other to the shores of the James.

At Williamsburg, Bruton Church should be visited and the Wythe House on Palace Green, restored and used as a parish house, the Powder Horn, and William and Mary College with its astonishing recent development and its Library, a veritable treasure house. In imagination (or perhaps in reality) the motorist will see the restored Colonial town with its college, capitol, palace, tavern, and Colonial homes and places of business—an ensemble that nowhere else could be reproduced. To be able to visualize a still earlier period in American history one needs but to drive five miles farther to reach the site of the first English Colony whose present appearance is fully described in Chapter III.





If time does not press, Yorktown may be visited on the same day as Williamsburg and Jamestown by driving back towards Lee Hall and taking the Yorktown road to the left. There has been but little change here since Colonial days. The sandy road has been paved and an unusually fine eighteen-hole golf course has been completed, embracing and preserving the old line of fortifications on which markers have been placed locating the redoubts captured by the French and the Americans. The old customhouse has become the Chapter House of the Comte de Grasse Chapter<sup>1</sup> of the D. A. R., and the visitor is expected to register there. From the upper windows one has an excellent view of the beautiful garden of the Nelson House with its ancient sundial. Returning from the Moore House outside of Yorktown one may take what is known as the "back road" to Hampton, avoiding the traffic of Newport News and passing near the battlefield of Big Bethel and "Chesterville," the home of Chancellor Wythe.

An interesting motor trip is one from Old Point by ferry to Willoughby Spit and thence to Norfolk and Virginia Beach, where there is an excellent hotel—the Cavalier—with a view of the broad Atlantic, and on to Cape Henry, famous for its oyster-roasts and its sand dunes.<sup>2</sup> On the old lighthouse may be seen the tablet placed by the A. P. V. A. commemorating the landing of the English in April 1607. The return may be by the same route or by the new Ocean Boulevard across Lynnhaven Bridge to the ferry. The round trip is between sixty and seventy miles. Another of the longer trips is to the Dismal

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<sup>1</sup>In 1929 a member of this Chapter, Mrs. Arthur Kelly Evans of Hot Springs, Virginia, gave \$25,000 for the restoration of the old customhouse.

<sup>2</sup>These are among the most interesting in the country as they are gradually burying the virgin forest.

Swamp, just over the border in North Carolina. The route is via Norfolk, Portsmouth, and Deep Creek to Wallaceton (about 30 miles). Then the trip continues for an hour by motor launch up a feeder, where water moccasins are among the sights, to Lake Drummond—Tom Moore's "Lake of the Dismal Swamp"—where one sails among weird cypress "knees" and, if one stays late enough at night, sees the spirit maiden

*"When, all night long by a firefly lamp  
She paddles her white canoe."*

A number of interesting places on the south side of the James may be visited by making a round trip of about seventy miles from Old Point. Crossing the river by the new four-and-a-half-mile James River bridge from Huntington Park, Newport News, and turning to the right up the river, the Old Brick Church—St. Luke's—is first reached. This rare example of the pre-Wren style of architecture is one of the oldest churches in America, its generally accepted date being 1632, although some antiquarians claim that the figure 8 on the old brick has been mistaken for a 3. A few miles beyond the old church is Smithfield, home of peanuts and the famous "Smithfield ham." Then comes Bacon's Castle and finally Claremont is reached. The return journey is by ferry or bridge to Jamestown and via Williamsburg and Lee Hall to Newport News. The Colony Inn at picturesque Hilton Village, just before reaching Newport News, and the Magnolia Tree Inn in Hampton will be found attractive for tea or dinner or a longer sojourn. Another interesting drive on the south side of the James is the road to the left after crossing the new bridge, which leads through a rich trucking region by way of the Nansemond and Chuckatuck bridges to Portsmouth and Norfolk. The

return to Old Point is via Ocean View and the Willoughby Spit motor ferry.

On certain days in the fall and spring many of the charming Colonial homes on the Peninsula are thrown open for the benefit of local churches or charities. Visitors so fortunate as to be in the neighborhood at these times may spend a delightful day visiting such homes in Williamsburg, or may drive further afield, turning to the left at Providence Forge on the Richmond highway and, on the "river road," calling at Westover (its gardens are open to the public week days the entire year) and Shirley. Crossing to the south side by Hopewell ferry, both Upper and Lower Brandon may be visited before returning via the James River bridge. Visitors from the North may be especially interested in the cotton fields which begin on the south side of the James.

Shorter attractive motor trips may be taken to Fort Eustis (27 miles from Old Point) where are stationed railway and heavy-tractor artillery units, and to Langley Field, the flying station near Hampton where are to be seen not only the usual hangars, dirigibles, and airplanes, but the laboratories where research work for both army and navy is carried on by the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics. Among the equipment are several "wind tunnels" for testing airplanes. Afternoon drives to the beaches are interesting—to Buckroe or Grand View for sea bathing in the Chesapeake or for the fine view of the Bay. En route to Grand View is the village of Fox Hill with a large fishing industry, and by driving straight on when returning, instead of turning to the left, one may find the inevitable "Lover's Lane." Old St. John's Church in Hampton may be visited, where may be seen the memorial window to the Colonial Clergy of

Elizabeth City Parish presented by the Kecoughtan Branch of the A. P. V. A., and a window given by the Episcopal Indians of Hampton Institute who were under the care of this church. The old Colonial silver of 1619 is also shown. St. John's graveyard is historically interesting. The Soldiers' Home is worth visiting at all seasons for its beautiful grounds and view over the Roads, and in June for its mile of blossoming hydrangeas. In the National Cemeteries near by lie more than 10,000 of the Nation's dead, both the Blue and the Grey. Hampton Institute lies next to the Home and has great attraction for all interested in its type of education. Its Trade School is the largest and best for Negroes in the country. Owing to new requirements for Southern public-school teachers, eight schools of collegiate grade have recently been established there including the only Library School for Negroes in existence. The visitor may see the many varied activities of classroom and shop in operation and on Sunday evenings may hear a chorus of nearly one thousand Negro voices sing the old plantation songs.

Hampton Roads, the Chesapeake, and the rivers flowing into them, form a veritable paradise for the yachtsman or fisherman. To say nothing of the charm of moonlight sailing parties or daytime picnics on the safe and beautiful waters of Hampton Roads, there are almost endless opportunities for fishing or motor trips. Among the latter are a sail up Pagan Creek on the south side of the James to Smithfield; to Jamestown and some of the old James River plantations; to the Naval Base across the Roads; to the Portsmouth Naval Hospital; to the Dismal Swamp by the Elizabeth River and the Deep Creek Canal; up the Chesapeake to the York, the Piankattank, or the Rappahannock, or to Mobjack Bay for the exploration of its interesting tributaries with plantation



houses on their shores and their wharves piled high with garden truck for the steamers, which also make this trip from Old Point. The beautiful plantation homes on Mobjack Bay may be reached by motoring to Yorktown and crossing the York by ferry or bridge leading to Gloucester and Mathews Counties. Eighteen miles beyond Gloucester Point, opposite Yorktown, by a turn to the right just before reaching Gloucester Courthouse, one may visit, at Elmington, on the south side of North River, a large bulb farm where in spring there are acres on acres of jonquils and daffodils in bloom. Toddsbury, near Elmington, is one of the oldest and most charming houses in Gloucester.

The above suggested trips are but a few of the many interesting outings which may be taken by land or water from Old Point Comfort.

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